



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

AH 36P4 W

HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL
ANDOVER-HARVARD THEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY



From the collection
of the
UNIVERSALIST HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

THE
APOCALYPSE FULFILLED

IN THE
CONSUMMATION OF THE MOSAIC ECONOMY
AND
THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

An Answer

TO THE

"APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES" AND "THE END," BY DR. CUMMING

BY THE

REV. P. S. DESPREZ, B.D.

CURATE OF EMMANUEL, CAMBERWELL

"Woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck **IN THOSE DAYS** for **IN THOSE DAYS** shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation and except that the Lord had shortened **THOSE DAYS**, no flesh should be saved; but **IN THOSE DAYS**, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken, and **THEN** shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory, and **THEN** shall he send his angels and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven"

Mark xiii. 17-27

THIRD EDITION

LONDON
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS

1861

BS
2825
.C8
D4
1861

LONDON
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWODE AND CO.
NEW-STREET SQUARE

2397
15

PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD EDITION.

MORE than six years have now elapsed since the Author applied himself to establish the point that no discrepancy existed between the visions of the Apocalypse and the predictions of our Lord and his Apostles, and that this hitherto mysterious book was a symbolical representation of the events connected with the Second Advent of Christ. He then gave expression to his convictions with fear and trembling, shrinking into himself with alarm at the solitariness of his position and the singularity of his opinions. In the years which have intervened he has had time for reflection, and, had he been so persuaded, for change of sentiment; but he has neither been refuted by his own re-consideration of the subject, nor have his arguments been met by others. In presenting his views once more to the public, he has the satisfaction of knowing that his conclusions are now more or less shared by those whose literary attainments give worth and weight to their opinions, and he thankfully avails himself of the shelter of their names, as well to strengthen himself in his own judgment, as to encourage independence of thought in others.

Mr. Maurice says, in his recently published Lectures on the Apocalypse, "The words 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled,' are words which I have accepted throughout these Lectures in their literal force." "I can never be thankful enough (he says in his preface) for having arrived at the conviction that the words 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand,' were used by the Evangelists in their strictest sense." In a bolder strain, and with less of mysticism, Dr. Rowland Williams (*Essays and Reviews*, p. 84) makes his author say, "The Apocalypse, if taken as a series of poetical visions which represent the outpouring of the vials of wrath upon the city where the Lord was slain, ceases to be a riddle. Its horizon answers to that of Jerusalem, already threatened by the legions of Vespasian, and its language is partly adapted from the older prophets, and partly a repetition of our Lord's warnings." And with a still more gratifying and personal acceptance of his view of Apocalyptic interpretation, the late lamented Dr. Donaldson thus writes in

his Christian Orthodoxy (p. 296), "That the event (described in the Apocalypse) was the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, appears to us perfectly certain. The argument for this has been put in a very simple and popular form by Mr. Desprez (*Apocalypse Fulfilled*; London, 1854), and we think that his general reasonings are unanswerable."

But whilst the Author rejoices that he can now come forward as the accredited advocate of a newly discovered truth rather than as the solitary apologist for a dubious and uncertain theory, he is not insensible to the fact that his views are by no means generally entertained. He would attribute this partly to that unconquerable aversion to change, especially in questions of a religious nature, which is a conspicuous feature in our national character, and partly to an unwillingness to investigate a new and unpopular subject with impartiality and attention.

Praiseworthy, however, as is the determination to regard opinions hallowed by age and grey with custom, with a holy jealousy, there are limits beyond which this conservatism may be carried with disadvantage to the cause of truth. Systems of theology (it has been observed), like systems of political government, are liable to be incrustated with the rust of former ages, and it does not follow that in contending for them men are fighting the battle of the Lord. This observation is true of the defence of that theory of Apocalyptic interpretation which has endeavoured to bring down the visions of the Book to the period supposed to be assigned for the second coming of Christ; the anxiety to maintain a view capable of adding support to a foregone conclusion deepening in proportion to the importance of the principle endangered by an opposite exegesis. But such a system of interpretation, although proceeding from a laudable anxiety to preserve intact the sacredness of old opinions, does not necessarily yield an increase on the side of truth. In the earlier ages of the Church, a view was held of the Apocalypse more in accordance with the prophetic teaching of our Lord and his Apostles than that commonly entertained in the present day, and it is possible that in upholding the later theory, men's sympathies have been more enlisted in support of incrustations which have gathered round the truth, than in behalf of the truth itself.

The principle which is at the root of a satisfactory interpretation of the Apocalypse, and which must be determined before it is possible to restore the meaning which it had to the mind of him who wrote it, is *the time of the second coming of Christ*. This Advent is the obvious and continuous theme of the whole book, and the point to be set at rest is, whether the visions refer to past developments of wrath upon the Jewish people, or whether they look forward to future scenes with which we are supposed to be concerned. An enquiry, therefore, into the scriptural view of the Advent might help to bring to a settlement this long agitated and most important question. To this we proceed to address ourselves; and if in the course of our investigation we unavoidably come into contact with received opinions, we would desire to remember that the Scriptures are not to be made responsible for

human errors, and that to deliver them from the charge of inconsistency should be the untiring effort of every lover of truth.

When Professor Jowett asserts, in his "Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture" (p. 346), that St. Paul was "*corrected*" by the course of events in his expectation of the coming of Christ, his language suggests a painful inconsistency between the Apostolical statements and the issue of the events themselves. Nor was St. Paul the only inspired historian against whom the charge of inconsistency can be laid. A similar accusation lies at the door both of St. Peter and St. James. Indeed, if existing theories respecting the future Advent of Christ be true, the writers of the New Testament generally were "*corrected*" by the course of events in their expectation of that coming."

This is a grave accusation. It evidently lies at the foundation of the much disputed question of the inspiration of the Scriptures of the later dispensation: for to predicate futurity in the nineteenth century of an event which in the first century was universally taught and believed to be imminent and impending, is necessarily to call in question the authority as well as the veracity of the writers of the New Testament. The position, however, taken up by the Essayist is neither solitary nor original. Gibbon long ago directed a polite sneer against the same patent inconsistency. In chap. xv. vol. 1, of his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," he says, "In the primitive Church it was universally believed that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven were near at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the Apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples; and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds before that generation was totally extinguished which had beheld his humble condition upon earth. The revolution of seventeen centuries has instructed us not to press too closely the mysterious language of prophecy and revelation, but so long as for wise purposes this *error* was permitted to subsist in the Church, it was productive of the most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians."

This taunt, while it has been evaded, has never been answered. Like an unquiet spectre, it rises up to confront us in the nineteenth as in the seventeenth century. Grotius, indeed, hazarded the conjecture that God purposely concealed his will from the Apostles on this important subject; but this supposition fails to meet the objection, that the sacred historians were suffered to enunciate as inspired truth what the event proved to be false. When Apostolic men are "*corrected*" or in "*error*," or give out authoritative declarations which are negatived by the course of events, it is natural to enquire, "What then did they know?" "What dependence is to be placed upon their teaching?" or, "What obligation rests upon mankind to obey their instructions?"

In this distressing disagreement between the statements of Scripture

and the conclusions of theological learning, it would be the part of piety to relieve the sacred historians of the charge of inconsistency, and to show that they were neither in "error," nor "corrected by the course of events," when they announced "the end of all things" to be imminent in their own day: for whilst it would undermine the foundations of religious faith to discover a want of truthfulness in divine teaching, it argues only an error in judgment, to find imperfection in that which is merely human. We are free to confess, that it is only on the latter supposition that we are honestly able to rescue the writers of the New Testament from the charge of want of knowledge or veracity: for it must be self-evident, that successfully to maintain the Inspiration of men whose statements are supposed to be contradicted by the course of events, is simply an impossibility.

Impaled then, as we are, on the horns of a dilemma, and destitute of any satisfactory mode of reconciliation, we prefer to call in question human authority to that which is divine, and to give more credit to the faintest whispers of Inspiration, than to the loudest assertions of uninspired men. We do this with the less hesitation, because we have not failed to perceive, with regret, that "Biblical criticism has been hitherto found truer to the traditions of the Church, than to the words of Christ." Justice compels us, however unwillingly, to give our assent to the accusation that, in order to preserve intact the sayings of antiquity, the "resources of knowledge have been turned into the means, not of discovering the true rendering, but of upholding a received one"; the obvious and literal meaning of words has been perverted; and when Scripture has been inadequate to furnish the sense required to support a foregone conclusion, no feeling of shame has been experienced in borrowing a more congenial sense from the use of a word in heathen writers. Thus γενεά, contrary to the sense in which it is used throughout the whole range of Scripture, has been *Homerically* made to signify a "race," instead of a "generation;" and the vicious principle has been put into force, which, contrary to every true canon of interpretation, is driven "to have recourse to the meaning of a word in Polybius for the explanation of its use in Plato, or to the turn of a sentence in Lycophron to illustrate a construction in Æschylus."

And, more than this, the same phrases have been made to have opposite meanings, not only in the writings of the same age, but in the mouths of the same men. When our Lord says "My time is *at hand*," or St. Paul, "The time of my departure is *at hand*," then indeed the expression "*at hand*" is allowed to mean something near and impending; but when the Apostle says "The Lord is *at hand*," or St. Peter, "The end of all things is *at hand*," the same expression is distorted to mean something distant and future. In like manner, when St. Paul says, "I will come unto you *shortly*, if the Lord will," the passage is naturally explained of a visit which was soon to take place; but when he says, "But this I say, brethren, the time is *short*," the event is dishonestly and indefinitely postponed. So when our Lord affirms, "Yet *a little while* I am with you," it is allowed that he referred to a brief sojourn

of a few months; but when St. Paul declares, "Yet *a little while* and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry," the little while is made to embrace an interval of hundreds of years. "If" (says Mr. Maurice) the writer told the hearers and readers of his day that the time was *at hand*, did he not mean them to understand that it *was* at hand? Can he possibly have designed, that what he expresses so definitely should be taken indefinitely? Can he have supported a Divine promise with an assurance which was belied by the event, or else with what, in an uninspired writer, we should call a pious fraud? It may well then be asked, upon what principle of legitimate interpretation can an event said to be "*at hand*," "*nearer*," "*approaching*," "*drawing nigh*," "*ready to be revealed*," about to take place "*shortly*," and within "*a little while*," A.D. 60 or thereabouts, be wire-drawn to refer to an event which is supposed not yet to have been consummated? The Bible does not countenance such elastic systems of interpretation. Jeremiah (xxvii. 16). rebukes the false prophets for saying that a long time was a short one. "Hearken not (he says) to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying: Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house shall now *shortly* be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you." In his opinion, short and long were not convertible terms, but seventy years was a long time and not a short one. Such a principle as that we have condemned is vicious enough, if carried out to its full extent, to overthrow every doctrine of Revelation, to do more harm than Voltaire ever contemplated, to hold up the interpretation of Scripture to the merited scorn of the infidel, and to make "the more sure word of prophecy" the most uncertain of all.

This textual inconsistency, the weakness of which perhaps has not been sufficiently considered, must necessarily be a grave objection to every thinking mind, and can scarcely fail to be painfully contrasted with the positiveness which ignores the existence of any difficulty respecting the common theory of the Second Advent, in the pulpit. But, not to insist upon this at greater length, we prefer to avail ourselves of this opportunity of showing some of the practical advantages which a literal reception of the Scriptural doctrine of a Past Second Advent would be likely to produce.

Uniform belief on this point would serve to establish the harmony of Scripture.

According to present theories, Scripture is most inharmonious. The sounds struck, especially by Apocalyptic divines, grate harshly upon a critical and a truth-loving ear. A more painful position can hardly be imagined than that of the honest interpreter, who endeavours to reconcile a Coming which our Lord declared should take place before the generation which heard his words had passed away, with an imaginary Advent yet future. He endeavours to separate the day of judgment from the destruction of Jerusalem; but he finds the same qualities of grandeur, and the same indications of speediness, predicated

of the one as of the other. He is disposed to look for an end of all things yet future ; but inspired teaching assures him that "the end of all things is at hand." He is anxious to realise the popular notion of the destruction of the material globe ; but criticism tells him that the so-called "end of the world" is the end of that age, and the supposed "last days" of Christianity are the last days of the Mosaic economy. He is told of a Millennium in some way connected with the period of the Advent ; but whether the Advent is pre-millennial or post-millennial ; whether it is a personal reign on earth, or a spiritual reign in heaven ; whether Jerusalem is to be rebuilt, sacrifice restored, and the Jews made the authors of salvation to the human race, or whether the Jews are to be scattered and destroyed,—are questions for which no answer can be found. He is required to believe that the "Gospel must be preached as a witness to every creature before the end should come," and that the various Missionary Societies of Christendom are diligently fulfilling the words of Christ ; but he learns that in Apostolic days the sound of Evangelical truth had "gone forth into all the world," and that the "Gospel *was* preached to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. i. 23). He is invited to assist a Society which has for its object the restoration of the Jews to their own land ; but a slight examination is sufficient to show, that all the Old Testament prophecies which speak of the return were written either before the Babylonish captivity, during the captivity, or during the actual return from the captivity ; that our Lord was silent on the subject altogether ; and that the words of St. Paul, "Even so then *at this present time* also there is a remnant, according to the election of grace," must be limited to those Jews who, repenting under the Gospel ministry, "saved themselves from that untoward generation." His reason, moreover, is insulted by the conclusions at which they have arrived who have wandered from the simple facts of Scripture. Although the speedy accomplishment of its visions is one of the most frequently reiterated and urgently expressed facts of the Apocalypse, he is surprised to find that there is scarcely an event in secular or ecclesiastical history, from the days of Constantine to those of Napoleon, which is not thought to have its corresponding symbol in its pages. Although it is most unreasonable to suppose that our Lord could have left the chronological character of his Advent an open question, or that the preachers of his Gospel could have uttered on a subject of such moment an uncertain sound, his religious sensibilities are pained to learn that, the end of the world having been vainly fixed for 1716—1793—1814—1825—1843—1849—1852, is once more definitely settled for 1864 : the falsification of former periods being found unable to deter modern prophets from attempting to fix another epoch, to be again deferred, and again falsified, in its turn. Neither is he much helped in his enquiry by calling to his aid that safety-valve of modern interpreters called "the double sense of prophecy." Under the application of this principle, as has been said, Scripture becomes "Gallus in campanili : The weathercock upon the church tower," and may be made to mean whatever the interpreter chooses. The "burden of Nineveh" in such a case may be made to pre-

figure the calamities of Babylon; and not yet exhausted (as the phrase is), may be also premonitory of the woes coming on Jerusalem. This fictitious coinage of the theological brain stands out in painful contrast to our Lord's declaration that the affliction then approaching *should never be repeated*. "*Neither shall be*"; "*No, nor ever shall be*." They who suppose the judgments pronounced upon Jerusalem to be typical of judgments yet future, can only suppose so: but it is not well to rest the faith and hope of the Church on a supposition not borne out by the precedents of similar prophecies, and negatived by the prediction itself.

It would then appear almost self-evident, that a system of interpretation which could render the sacred volume consistent with common sense and with itself would stand out in agreeable contrast from this discord of the theological mind; and no small aid would be given to the Biblical student if it could be shown that the prophecies of our Lord in the Gospels, and the reiteration of those prophecies in the Epistles and the Apocalypse, proclaim one continuous and harmonious fact, the precise period of the accomplishment of which can be accurately determined, the particular object satisfactorily ascertained, and whose near approach was the unvarying theme of the universal Church in Apostolic days.

Neither should it be overlooked, that the admission of the positive statements of Scripture respecting the Advent, in their widest sense, would do much to establish Christianity on a firmer basis.

To deny that a "smouldering scepticism" does not pervade religious thought in the present day, would be to contradict observation and experience. Thinking men are scarcely satisfied with the arguments generally adduced in defence of existing systems, and reason has already entered into an unholy contest with faith. The Christian advocate, unable to bring forward any solid argument in behalf of the truth of Christianity from prophecy, is disarmed of his best weapon. Unlike the Jew, who could point to the fulfilment of prophecy as an evidence of the inspiration of the Old Testament, the Christian, by a suicidal act, weakens, if not destroys, the prophetic argument of the New. When pressed by the intelligent Hindoo to reconcile the words of our Lord and his Apostles with an Advent delayed over nineteen centuries, he is powerless in the hands of his opponents; or when required to accommodate the persuasion of immediate blessedness or misery after death, to the idea of a distant day of retribution, he is driven to invent what may be called a Protestant Purgatory. And even amongst Christian assemblies the anachronous exhortations of the preacher respecting an Advent which, like the sword of Damocles, is thought to be ever suspended over the Church, exert no visible influence on the lives and conduct of men. The doctrine of an approaching Millennium has no sensible bearing on the transactions of business, or on the commercial speculations of its advocates. Applicable as such exhortations may have

been in an early age of the Church, when even the term of natural life was to be anticipated by the day of the Lord, they have now only a tendency to cause weak and feeble women to part with their possessions and goods, or to become hysterically anticipative of an imaginary convulsion of all things. But it is not by arguments of such a doubtful kind that the truth of Christianity is to be supported. It is capable of a firmer basis and a more certain defence. Above the proof to be derived from the excellence of its moral precepts and their universal adaptability to the wants of mankind, above even that afforded by its miracles and its mighty works, the argument from fulfilled prophecy would be an incontrovertible and an enduring evidence that Christianity is from God. Unlike the prophecies of the Old Testament, of which it has been said (whether correctly or not) that the predictive element is less abounding than the moral, it is impossible to eliminate prognostication from the prophecies of our Lord. The fulfilment of these prophecies demonstrates his religion to be true: and we cannot but regret the weakness which, in these days of distrust, would invalidate the proof we have, by extending it to the support of theories with which it is not concerned.

Another advantage which might not unreasonably be expected from a recognition of the Second Advent as a past event, would be the effect it might have in the conversion of the once chosen people.

The Jew, it must be allowed, in spite of strenuous efforts for his Christianization, is as stiffnecked and unimpressible as in the days of St. Paul; and the arguments employed for his conversion are not calculated to effect much alteration in his sentiments. The Saviour, when sinking in weakness before the malice of enemies who, unconvinced by miracles, still called in question his Messiahship, held out as a last and convincing proof the threatened vengeance of an approaching and a decisive Advent. In answer to the solemn interrogatory put to him by the High Priest in the presence of the Jewish Sanhedrim, "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter (from just now, i.e. immediately) shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." This was the confirming proof which he declared he would give them of his divine mission. For that proof they waited forty years. During that unique and extraordinary period two Religions, equally claiming divine origin, and equally attested by miracle, ran parallel and side by side. It was then a legitimate question which of the two was the most worthy of credit—The Law or the Gospel? Sinai or Calvary? Moses or Christ? This most important question was not then decided: the Christian stoutly affirming, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night," and the Jew asking in sublime scorn, "Where is the promise of his coming?" But when the "End" came upon the Holy place and the Sanctuary; when Temple and Priest, Altar and Sacrifice, Religion and Nation, sank in one common and irremediable ruin, then

there was something to witness to the fact, and the proof, so long withheld, was undeniably manifested, that Jesus was the Christ.

This proof, the object of which was to bring a terrible conviction to the Jew of that age, is ignored, explained away, or withheld from his descendant. In order to induce him to embrace Christianity, he is chiefly reminded of the terrors of a distant Advent, although he has not sufficiently pondered the consequences of one already past. A different theology might have produced a different result. What if he had been told that Christians are in possession of a Book descriptive of the scenes accompanying that Advent of wrath upon the chosen people—that his nation is principally concerned with the sublime visions of the Apocalypse—that the Book is thoroughly *Jewish* in its complexion and character—that in chap. vi. “the souls of them that had been slain” are seen under the *Altar*—that the saved ones of chap. vii. are sealed “*from the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*”—that in chap. ix. mention is made of a city “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt,” and identified with Jerusalem, for it is added, “*where also our Lord was crucified*”—that in chap. xviii. the same city, mysteriously called Babylon, must also be identified with Jerusalem, because in her was found the blood of saints, apostles, and prophets, and “*it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem*”—that “*Babylon is fallen, is fallen,*” in hopeless and irremediable desolation, never again to become the city of God; and that the “*New Jerusalem*” (Christianity still inscribed with a *Jewish* name) is from henceforth to be the universal and imperishable religion of mankind;—might not such a representation of the calamities which have fallen upon the Jewish house have long ago convinced the Jew of the futility of his persevering rejection of the Messiah, and have assured him that the proof which he demanded at the Crucifixion has been abundantly afforded?

We may add to this, that a recognition of this truth would do much to preserve the Church from divisions and uncharitableness.

This prolongation of an event beyond its dispensational limits, this attempt to fill up a space respecting which Scripture is silent, has been the starting point of error as well as the fruitful source of unkindness. The followers of Mr. Irving, having rightly concluded from Scripture that certain gifts of healing, tongues, prophecy, &c., were to be exercised in the Church until the period of the Lord's second coming, have been naturally led to expect a continuance of these miraculous powers. On the supposition that the event has not occurred, they are consistent in saying they *ought* to have the gifts. Yes, they ought to have them: but where are they? Show us but one miracle, and it sufficeth us. This futile attempt to revive miraculous powers which were intended to be only of a dispensational character, demonstrates either that the Advent has passed and the gifts have ceased, or that, if not now exercised, they are in abeyance in the Church. The disciples of Swedenborg have equally made the Advent the starting point of error. Admitting an Advent in power instead of in person, and conceding

(which is a still greater point) that it is "un fait accompli"; with a strange recoil from truth they suppose the time of the Advent to be that of the French Revolution in 1775, and the evidence that it is past is sought for in the enlightenment of modern Europe. Calvinists and Arminians have wrangled fiercely on the much-disputed questions of election and final perseverance; but what if it had been seen that the election of Scripture simply comprehended those gathered from the four winds of heaven by the Apostolic ministry, and that final perseverance was a quality distinguishing those who should "endure unto the end," amidst the persecutions of Gospel times? Difficulties have been experienced in attempting to reconcile the life-lasting priesthood of Melchisedec with the everlasting priesthood of Christ; but these would have been lessened had it been perceived that he "appeared the second time *without sin* (no more as an interceding priest) unto salvation;" and that the *continuous* (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές, not Aaronic but Melchisedekian) priesthood of Christ ceased with the coming of that end, when all Jewish opposition being subdued, the Son "delivered up the (mediatorial) kingdom to God even the Father, that God might be all in all." High Church and Low Church have said bitter things in defence or in disapproval of Apostolical Succession; but the contest might have been less sharp had the words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," which seem to countenance such a heaven-sent commission, been fairly and critically rendered, "*Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age.*" A more Scriptural understanding of the mind and purposes of God respecting the Second Advent would have rendered variety of theological sentiment on these and cognate subjects a thing impossible, and would also have effectually precluded that unsatisfactory mode of meeting difficulties which either passes by "things hard to be understood" without notice, or else consigns them in despair to an ever distant and unassailable futurity.

And uncharitableness as well as confusion is the necessary consequence of being at sea upon principles. The Advent having been postponed beyond the limit assigned to it in Scripture, events which were to precede it have been postponed likewise. Antichrists of whom St. John wrote in his day, "*Now* are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time," have been anachronized to signify Neologian teachers, and epithets applicable to the heretics of those "last and perilous times" have been rashly transferred to our own. The Apostacy foretold by our Lord as the precursor of his Advent, and declared by St. Paul to be "already working" in his own day, has been accommodated to refer to modern efforts to rescue sacred truth from what has been called an "invincible ignorance;" and the unrighteous deceits of the man of sin *then* "sitting in the temple of God" have been wrested to stigmatise the thoughtful labours of men whom the Church should delight to honour. Ah! if it had been possible to have foreseen another apostacy beyond that predicted of those last days, an apostacy over which angels might weep, might it not have been that of those who, "turning away their ears from the truth unto fables," prefer the

falsification of Scripture to the contradiction of their own theories, whilst they affect a supreme contempt for the laborious conclusions of others?

And whilst the advantages arising to our common Christianity from a uniform perception of this truth would, it is conceived, be neither few nor unimportant, the objections which might be raised against it are less insurmountable than the arguments which may be opposed to them.

Ecclesiolatry might adduce the argument from antiquity in support of opinions hoary with age and grey with the consentient acceptance of centuries ; but it might be answered, that the voice of our Lord and his Apostles is before the symbols of the Church, and if the argument from antiquity were universally conclusive, then would the Mosaic law be more trustworthy than Christianity, and Protestantism itself be nothing better than a criminal schism.

Bibliolatry might assert that no event which has yet taken place has come up to the literality or the sublimity of the predictions ; but it might be replied, that the desolation of Babylon, Idumæa, and Egypt is couched in similar terms, and that "expressions which would be regarded as rhetorical exaggerations in the Western world, are the natural vehicles of thought to an Eastern people."

Affection might desire an Advent in person, rather than in power, without deigning to remember that a divine Advent equally personal is depicted (Isaiah xiii. 5,) as coming upon Babylon : "They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even the Lord*, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land."

Fanaticism might wonder that the Mount of Olives has not been yet cleft asunder, nor the saints caught up to meet the Lord in the air ; but caution might well fear to rest a solution of the question on an obscure passage, historical rather than predictive, of Zechariah ; or on a rhetorical (yet definitely expressed with regard to time) sentence of St. Paul.

Ignorance of the laws of biblical criticism might found an argument in favour of the futurity supposed to be denoted in the Apocalypse from "the things which shall be *hereafter*" of Rev. i. 19 ; but the un-deviating use of the Greek verb forbids a future signification, and the words translated "*hereafter*" may be proved (Rev. iv. 1) to mean things *immediately consequent*, and not indefinitely future.

Religious veneration might suggest, that the doctrine of a Past Advent invalidates the idea of a future Day of Judgment ; without sufficient regard for the consideration, that "the judgment *is* set and the books *are* open," and that the conviction of a judgment past and *passing* upon every child of man must necessarily have a more constraining influence upon human conduct than the supposition of a judgment day indefinitely postponed.

An over-anxious conservatism might fear, that if the notion of sudden vengeance upon the unwatchful and unwary were removed, crime would be multiplied upon the earth, and a blank created, for which no adequate substitute could be found ; but it remains to be tried whether the ideas of a finished salvation, a perfected Christianity, an open kingdom of heaven, a life-state in Christ, an eternal reign in an eternal kingdom already set up, might not have a more constraining influence upon mankind than the questionable theory of an uncertain coming. The objections then against the Advent as a past event are neither fatal nor insuperable, and may be seen to be less valid than those which may be advanced against an Advent yet to come : for whilst the one can be defended by the most undoubted warrants of Scripture, the expectation of the other can only be an unauthorised effort of the human mind.

It only remains for the Author to say, that the interpretation of such a difficult Book as the Apocalypse is not the work of one man or of one age. Confined, however, as its visions are to the period of Jerusalem's downfall, the basis of its symbols can only be sought for within a limited compass, and a closer examination of contemporaneous history may make the interpretation already given still more perfect. As the result of increased information, he might now prefer (if any two individuals are intended) James and Mathias as the "Two Witnesses," whose corpses were to lie in the street of the great city : the former called a "witness" by Eusebius, and slain in the period immediately preceding the Siege of Jerusalem ; the latter said by tradition to have been stoned by the Jews before the destruction of the Temple. He might also wish that he had interpreted the visions of Daniel as descriptive of analogous desolations under Antiochus Epiphanes rather than as direct prophecies of scenes which took place in the last days of the Mosaic Economy ; and that he had been led to consider the "New Jerusalem" more as a figurative representation of perfected Christianity coming down from heaven, than the heavenly state itself. These are minor points, in no way affecting the truth of the general principles which have been adopted. The right key has been put into the lock, and the wards will, sooner or later, turn of themselves.

Camberwell, 1861.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

Date of the Apocalypse -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	PAGE 1
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------

LECTURE II.

The Sealed Book -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

LECTURE III.

Opening of the First Four Seals -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
-----------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

LECTURE IV.

The Fifth Seal. The Æra of Martyrs -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
--------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

LECTURE V.

The Sixth Seal -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

LECTURE VI.

God's Sealed Ones -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	105
---------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE VII.

The First Four Trumpets and Vials -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	131
-------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE VIII.

The Fifth Trumpet and Vial -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	161
------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE IX.

The Sixth Trumpet and Sixth Vial -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	186
------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE X.

The Open Book	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	PAGE 209
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

LECTURE XI.

The Resurrection of the Two Witnesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	244
---------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XII.

The Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	286
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XIII.

The Church in the Wilderness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	307
------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XIV.

The Beast rising from the Sea, and the Beast coming up out of the Earth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	325
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XV.

Babylon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	357
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XVI.

The Coming of Christ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	390
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XVII.

The Millennium, the Judgment, and the Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	432
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

LECTURE XVIII.

The New Jerusalem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	472
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

APPENDIX.

The Identity between the Trumpets and Vials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	503
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

THE
APOCALYPSE FULFILLED,

IN THE

CONSUMMATION OF THE MOSAIC ECONOMY, AND THE COMING OF
THE SON OF MAN.

LECTURE I.

DATE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

1 REV. 1, 2, 3.

1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which *must shortly come to pass* : and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John :

2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3. Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein : for *the time is at hand*.

22 REV. 6, 7. 16.

6. And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true : and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which *must shortly be done*.

7. Behold, *I come quickly* : blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

16. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things *in the churches*.

Our first Lecture must be devoted to establish certain preliminaries upon which the whole theory of the subsequent interpretation is to be grounded. Here it is of the utmost importance that the base of the future superstructure should be firm and strong.

We are about to erect a building, to raise story upon story, to pile up casement upon casement; it is well then to look to the foundation that it is securely laid, "lest haply after we have begun to build, we should not be able to finish," and the edifice erected at so much cost and care should fall headlong to the ground. As a preliminary of the highest moment with regard to the subsequent interpretation, it is proposed to consider in this Introductory Lecture the question of the date of the Apocalypse.

Here is a material difference of opinion.

We have men of high classical attainments and critical acumen maintaining the Neronian date, *i. e.* that the Apocalypse was written during the reign of Nero, and consequently *before* the destruction of Jerusalem¹; and others of equally high reputation defending the Domitianic date, *i. e.* that it was written during the reign of Domitian, and consequently *after* the destruction of Jerusalem. Who shall decide? And yet a decision must be come to; all subsequent interpretation depends upon this question; it is a point of all others most necessary to be attained. If the Apocalypse was written in the time of Nero, *before the destruction of Jerusalem*, a consistent, reasonable, and satisfactory explanation can be given of the book: if written in the reign of Domitian, *after the destruction of Jerusalem*, that line of interpretation only can be adopted which rests on the will and caprice of the interpreter; and this opens so wide a field, and is capable of such unlimited extravagance, that it is no uncommon event for hermeneutical opponents to take contra-

¹ Bishop Newton: "These prophecies were written a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem." Professor Lee: "I take it for granted that the author lived some time before the destruction of Jerusalem." Moses Stuart: "That the Apocalypse was written under the bloody reign of Nero, or shortly after, is a matter agreed on by nearly all the recent critics who have studied the literature of this book." To these may be added, Sir I. Newton, Hentenius, Harduin, Grotius, Lightfoot, Schleusner, Hammond, Dr. A. Clarke, Wetstein, and many others. "Wetstein contends, and he is supported by very great men among the ancients and moderns, that the Book of Revelation was written before the Jewish war and the civil wars in Italy. That the important events which took place at that time, the greatest that ever happened since the foundation of the world, were worthy enough of the Divine notice, as the affairs of his church were so intimately connected with them."—Dr. Adam Clarke.

dictory¹ views of the same symbol, or for interpreters holding the same religious tenets, to place an interval of 1000 years more or less between their several interpretations.

Now before any argument in favour of the Neronic date can have weight, it must be shown that sufficient ground exists for receiving with diminished confidence the common opinion that the Revelation was seen by St. John in the reign of Domitian; and as the question of the date is *not* determined in Scripture, it will be necessary to examine the opinions of the early Christian Fathers upon this point.

The defenders of the Domitianic date rely chiefly on a passage of Irenæus², quoted verbatim by Eusebius in the 3rd and 5th books of his Ecclesiastical History:—"For had it been necessary that his name should be in open publication at the present time, it would have been mentioned by him, especially as being the one who saw the Apocalypse; for it is not so long ago since it was seen, but almost in our own generation, at the close of the reign of Domitian." This statement of Irenæus is considerably weakened, if not shown utterly unworthy of credit, by a similar statement of the same writer, professedly derived from those who had received it from the Apostle John and the other Apostles, that *Christ lived to be near fifty years of age*. — (Con. Hær. lib. vi. cap. 26.)

If we add to this his belief in the absurd opinion of the Alexandrian Jews respecting the miraculous version of the LXX. (Eus. Eccles. Hist. v. 8.), and his adoption of the millennial views of Papias (Eus. Eccles. Hist. iii. 39.), it will be seen that no implicit reliance can be placed upon a writer guilty of

¹ Luther asserted that the Beast, Rev. xvii., was the Pope. The Pope asserted that the Beast was Luther, and the false prophet Calvin. Luther said that the number of the Beast indicated by the numerals 666 was to be found in the name of the Pope. The Pope retaliated by finding the number of the Beast in the name of Luther.

"The common method of interpretation founded on the hypothesis that the book was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, is utterly destitute of certainty, and leaves every commentator to the luxuriance of his own fancy, as is sufficiently evident from what has been done already on this book." — Wetstein's Gr. Test. vol. ii. p. 889.

² "Εἰ δὲ εἶδει ἀναφανδὸν ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ κηρύττεσθαι τοῦνομα αὐτοῦ δι' ἐκείνον ἂν ἰρρέθη τοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν ἑωρακότος. Οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸ πολλοῦ χρόνον ἑωράθη ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας γενεᾶς πρὸς τῷ τέλει Δομετιανοῦ ἄρχης."—Irenæus, in Hær. v. 30.; Eus. Eccles. Hist. iii. 18., v. 8.

such gross blunders, and that nothing is more probable than that he should have committed an error with regard to the date of the Apocalypse.

Eusebius¹, however, appears to have relied entirely on this passage of Irenæus as determining the time when the Apocalypse was seen, and to have drawn from it the conclusion that St. John saw the Apocalypse in the reign of Domitian.² He says: "In this persecution it is handed down by tradition that the Apostle and Evangelist John, who was yet living, in consequence of his testimony to the Divine word, was condemned to dwell on the Island of Patmos;" and then he quotes the passage of Irenæus before referred to as the source from whence this tradition sprang. This is of great consequence, because it serves to show, that the opinion of Eusebius is *not independent testimony*, but simply a repetition of the statement of Irenæus; and this observation is also applicable to the testimony of Jerome, who only reiterates the opinions of Irenæus and Eusebius.

This tradition is further supported by Victorinus³, who asserts: "When John saw the Apocalypse, he was in the island of Patmos, banished by Cæsar Domitian." "Domitian being slain, John, dismissed from banishment, afterwards committed to writing this same Apocalypse which he had received from the Lord."

But Victorinus on Rev. iv. 14.⁴ says: "For he wrote

¹ "Ἐν τούτῳ κατέχει λόγος τὸν ἀπόστολον ἅμα καὶ εὐαγγελιστὴν Ἰωάννην ἔτι τῷ βίῳ ἐνδιατρίβοντα, τῆς εἰς τὸν θεῖον λόγον ἕνεκα μαρτυρίας, Πάτμον οἰκεῖν καταδικασθῆναι τὴν νῆσον, γράφων γέ τοι ὁ Εἰρηναῖος," κ. τ. λ. Eus. Eccles. Hist. iii. 18. "Ἐνθα τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν ἔωρακεν, ὡς δηλοῖ Εἰρηναῖος."—Eus. Chronicon.

² That Eusebius was not very careful in preserving the strict meaning of the authors quoted by him, may be proved from the circumstance that he renders the words of Tertullian "cum maxime Romæ orientem" (Tert. Apol. 5.) "then chiefly springing up at Rome," by "ἡνίκα μάλιστα ἐν Ῥώμῃ τὴν ἀνατολὴν πᾶσαν ὑποτάξας,"—translated by Dr. Cruse "particularly then, when after subduing all the East, he exercised his cruelty against all at Rome,"—giving a totally different meaning from the original.

³ "Quando hoc vidit Johannes, erat in insulâ Patmos, in metallum damnatus, a Domitiano Cæsare." "Interfecto Domitiano, Johannes de metallo dimissus, sic postea tradidit hanc eandem quam acceperat a Domino Apocalypsin."—In Bib. Max. iii. p. 419.

⁴ "Nam Evangelium postea scripsit cum essent Valentinus, et Cerinthus, et Ebion, et cæteri scholæ Sathanæ diffusi per orbem, convenerunt ad illum de finitimis provinciis omnes, et compulerunt ut ipse testimonium conscriberet."

his Gospel *afterwards*, when Valentinus, and Cerinthus, and Ebion, and others of Satan's school, were scattered over the world : all from the neighbouring provinces came together to him, and compelled him also to write his Gospel." Yet Epiphanius¹ declares, that John wrote his Gospel after the return from Patmos in the time of Claudius Cæsar, A. D. 54. A fragment of Hippolytus places the date of that Gospel A. D. 61, and Sir Isaac Newton, quoting from Caius, says that "Cerinthus lived so early that he resisted the Apostles at Jerusalem in or before the first year of Claudius, that is, 26 years before the death of Nero, and died before John." Victorinus is followed by Sulpicius Severus, Orosius, and others.

It appears then matter of fact that a tradition originated with Irenæus² (a writer by no means infallible), which was subsequently propagated by successive ecclesiastical writers, who followed one another much on the same principle as the Chiliasts followed Papias on the question of the Millennium,—“He was the cause that by far the greater number of Church writers after

¹ “Μετὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς Πάργου ἐπάνοδον, τὴν ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου γενομένην Καίσαρος.”—Epiphan. Hær. 51.

² “Irenæus introduced an opinion that the Apocalypse was written in the time of Domitian ; but then he also postponed the writing of some others of the sacred books, and was to place the Apocalypse after them. He might perhaps have heard from his master Polycarp that he had received this book from John about the time of Domitian's death ; or indeed John might himself at that time have made a new publication of it, from whence Irenæus might imagine it was then but newly written. Eusebius in his Chronicle and Ecclesiastical History follows Irenæus, but afterwards in his Evangelical Demonstrations he conjoins the banishment of John into Patmos with the deaths of Peter and Paul, and so do Tertullian and Pseudo-Prochorus as well as the first author, whoever he was, of that very ancient fable that John was put by Nero into a vessel of hot oil, and coming out unhurt, was banished by him into Patmos. Though this story be no more than a fiction, yet was it founded on a tradition of the first Churches, that John was banished into Patmos in the days of Nero. Epiphanius represents the Gospel of John as written in the time of Claudius, and the Apocalypse even before that of Nero.

“Arethas in the beginning of his Commentary quotes the opinion of Irenæus from Eusebius, but follows it not ; for he afterwards affirms the Apocalypse was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that former commentators had expounded the Sixth Seal of that destruction. With the opinion of the first commentators agrees the tradition of the churches of Syria preserved to this day in the title of the Syriac version of the Apocalypse, which title is this, — ‘The Revelation which was made to John the Evangelist by God, in the island of Patmos, into which he was banished by Nero the Cæsar.’” — Sir I. Newton.

him held the like doctrine, *pleading the antiquity of the man*," (Eus. Eccles. Hist. iii. 39.), that the Apocalypse was seen by St. John in Patmos at the close of Domitian's reign.

The question arises was this tradition universally received; and if not, is there positive evidence to show that a contrary opinion was entertained even from the earliest times?

The first testimony which I shall adduce to show that the tradition of Irenæus was not universally adopted, is that of Epiphanius¹, who says of St. John,—“Who prophesied in the time of *Claudius* (A.D. 54) . . . the prophetic word according to the Apocalypse being disclosed.”

In a fragment of an antient Latin writer², attributed by some to Caius, it is found—“Paul, following the order of his predecessor John, wrote only to seven churches by name in similar order.” In this passage John is called the predecessor of Paul, and Paul is said only to have written to seven churches by name, following the example of John, who wrote only to the seven churches of Asia. Now as Paul suffered martyrdom A.D. 68, this would place the date of the Apocalypse prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

The title of the Syriac version is “The Revelation which was made to John the Evangelist by God in the island of Patmos, into which he was banished by *Nero the Cæsar*.” Tertullian³ conjoins the banishment of John with the martyrdom of Peter and Paul at Rome, *under Nero*—“O happy Roman church, where Peter is deemed worthy to share the passion of the Lord, where Paul is beatified by the same death as John (the Baptist), where the Apostle John plunged into burning oil, escapes unhurt, and is condemned to banishment.” Andreas⁴,

¹ “Προφητεύσαντος ἐν χρόνοις Κλαυδίου . . . δεικνυμένου τοῦ κατὰ τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν λόγον προφητικῶν.” — Hær. 51.

² “Paulus, sequens prædecessoris sui Johannis ordinem, nonnisi nominatim septem ecclesiis scribat ordine tali.”—Muratori, Antiq. Ital. iii. p. 854.

³ “Felix ecclesia Romana, ubi Petrus passioni Dominicæ adæquatur, ubi Paulus Johannis exitu coronatur, ubi Apostolus Johannes posteaquam in oleum igneum demersus, nihil passus est, in insulam relegatur.”

⁴ Andreas and Arethas, the earliest commentators excepting a few fragments of Victorinus, whose interpretations have come down to us, not only expound the Apocalypse of the woes which fell upon the Jews, but declare that others had done so also. Arethas moreover shows that he was acquainted with the tradition of Irenæus, which he evidently considered incorrect. This is invaluable, because it shows that from early times the symbols of the Revelation

bishop of Cæsarea, in his Greek commentary on the Apocalypse, still extant, (c. vi. 16.) says, "John received this revelation under the reign of *Vespasian*." On Rev. vi. 12.: "There are not wanting those who apply this passage to *the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus*." On Rev. vii. 2. he says: "Although these things happened in part to Jewish Christians, who escaped the evils inflicted on Jerusalem by the Romans, yet they more probably refer to Antichrist." Arethas, who succeeded Andreas, mentions the statement of Irenæus before alluded to; he says: "That John was banished to the isle of Patmos under Domitian, Eusebius alleges in his Chronicon." But on Rev. vi. 12. he affirms: "Some refer this to *the siege of Jerusalem by Vespasian*, interpreting all tropically." On Rev. vii. 1.: "Here, then, were manifestly shown to the Evangelist *that things were to befall the Jews in their war against the Romans*, in the way of avenging the sufferings inflicted upon Christ." On Rev. vii. 4.: "When the Evangelist received these oracles, the destruction in which the Jews were involved *was not yet inflicted by the Romans*." To all this may be added the testimony of Origen¹, upon which Moses Stuart, from whom this evidence is chiefly taken, lays great weight: "The King of the Romans, as tradition teaches, condemned John, who bare witness for the word of truth, to the island of Patmos. John, moreover, teaches us the things respecting his testimony, *without saying who condemned him*, when he utters these things in the Apocalypse." It must have been impossible for Origen, the greatest critical scholar of the first three centuries, not to have known the statement of Irenæus respecting the Domitianic date, and this makes his silence all the more marked. He mentions neither Nero nor Domitian. "The King of the Romans," he says, "condemned John to the isle of Patmos," and he remarks that St. John is silent respecting the author of his exile,—"*without saying who condemned him*."

Even on the supposition that the evidence adduced for the

were applied to the closing scenes of the Jewish dispensation, and that the fable of the Pope and the scarlet lady is the myth of yesterday.

¹ 'Ο δὲ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς ὡς ἡ παράδοσις διδάσκει κατεδίκασε τὸν Ἰωάννην μαρτυροῦντα διὰ τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγον εἰς Πάτμον τὴν νῆσον. διδάσκει δὲ τὰ περὶ τοῦ μαρτυρίου ἑαυτοῦ Ἰωάννης, μὴ λέγων τίς αὐτὸν κατέδικασε, φάσκων ἐν τῇ Ἀποκαλύψει ταῦτα. — Opp. in Matt. iii.

Neronian date is not so conclusive as that brought forward for the Domitianic date (although when it is considered that Eusebius followed Irenæus, and that Jerome followed Eusebius, and so on, the testimony becomes that not of many individuals but of one), yet still it must be admitted there is positive external evidence in favour of the Neronian, as well as of the Domitianic date, and all that can be done is to array father against father, and testimony against testimony, weighing the probabilities of the truthfulness of each in the balances of our own judgment.

It is plain the question *cannot* be settled by external testimony. What, then, is the fair and manly course to be taken in bringing this point to a right issue? If the conflicting traditions of the early church make it impossible to determine whether John was banished to Patmos in the reign of Nero or Domitian, let an appeal be made to the *internal evidence* of the book itself. Let the words traced by the Spirit of God teach us that knowledge which we cannot learn from the surmises of the early fathers, or from the traditions of the Church. Let the love of "science falsely so called," which would exhaust human wisdom in building up a position drawn from sources from which no valid argument can be drawn, turn from the fables of antiquity to the truth of revelation. The Scriptures are silent; the voice of antiquity is divided; one only course remains (a course the supporters of the Domitianic date are very reluctant to adopt), and that is, to rest the question upon far surer grounds than the tradition of Irenæus, or the hesitations of Eusebius, who does not seem to have believed that St. John wrote the book at all.¹ Let us then inquire—Is there *internal*

¹ Eusebius affords almost a solitary example amongst the early fathers of hesitation and doubt respecting the authorship and canonical rank of the Apocalypse: he says, (Eccles. Hist. iii. 24.): "The opinions respecting the Revelation are still greatly divided" — "Τῆς δ' Ἀποκαλύψεως ἐφ' ἑκάτερον εἰκὺν παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς περιέλεται ἡ δόξα."

Speaking of canonical books, "To these may be added, *if it seem good*, (εἰ φανεῖν,) the Apocalypse of John," . . . "which some reject, but others reckon it among the acknowledged books."—Eus. Eccles. Hist. iii. 25. He gives at some length the opinions of Dionysius, who supposed the author of the Apocalypse not to be the same John who wrote the Gospel: "That it is a John who wrote these things we must believe, as he says it; but what John it is, is uncertain." "I am of opinion, there were many of the same name with John the Apostle." . . . "I think, therefore, that it was another one of those in Asia, for

evidence from the book itself which makes it morally certain that the Revelation must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem? I answer,—there is overwhelming evidence in favour of this position in every page and line of the Apocalypse, whilst there is no internal evidence, deserving the name, to show that it was written after that period.

1. Our first argument is, that St. John speaks continually of the *speedy coming of Christ*.

Rev. i. 7.—“Behold He cometh with clouds.”

Rev. iii. 11.—“Behold I come quickly.”

Rev. xiv. 14.—“Behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man.”

Rev. xvi. 15.—“Behold I come as a thief.”

Rev. xix. 11.—“I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him . . . is called the Word of God.”

Rev. xxii. 20.—“He which testifieth these things, saith, surely I come quickly.”

*No scriptural statement is capable of more decided proof than that the coming of Christ is the destruction of Jerusalem, and the close of the Jewish dispensation.*¹

they say that there are two monuments at Ephesus, and that each bears the name of John.”—(Eus. Eccles. Hist. vii. 25.) I do not mention this to cast any doubt upon the authorship of the Apocalypse, for the testimony of antiquity may be said to be universally agreed that the Apocalypse was written by St. John. This is also confirmed by the internal evidence of the Book:—Compare

“If I will that he tarry till I come.” John, xxi. 22.

“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Rev. xxii. 20.

“Behold the Lamb of God.” John, i. 36.

“A Lamb stood on the Mount Sion.” Rev. xiv. 1.

“In the beginning was the Word.” John, i. 1.

“His name is called the Word of God.” Rev. xix. 13.

“They shall look on him whom they pierced.” John, xix. 37.

“Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.” Rev. 1. 7.

These and many other interesting peculiarities of style and language, found only in the Apocalypse and in the Gospel of St. John, render it highly probable that he was the author. These doubts of Eusebius are only adduced to show that no great dependence can be placed upon him with regard to any decision respecting the date, and if that in his opinion, the claim to authorship was not completely settled, his testimony with regard to the date must necessarily be looked upon as liable to suspicion.

¹ Bishop Newton says: “Our Saviour’s repeating so frequently in this book,—‘Behold, I come quickly;’ ‘Behold, he cometh with clouds, and

At this part of the subject I cannot stop to adduce the many and varied proofs which establish this—a few must suffice :—

Matt. xxiv. 29.—“*Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . . they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven.*”

Mark xiii. 24.—“*In those days, after that tribulation . . . then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory.*”

Luke xxi. 22—27.—“*These be the days of vengeance . . . for there shall be great distress in the land, ἐν τῇ γῇ, Judæa, and wrath upon this people, but woe to them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days . . . they shall fall by the edge of the sword . . . and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles . . . and then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*”

Nothing can be plainer than that our Lord said his advent should take place, according to St. Matthew, “*Immediately after the tribulation of those days ;*” according to St. Mark, “*In those days after that tribulation ;*” according to St. Luke, when “*Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles,*” and there should be “*great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.*” At that time, and at no other, did our Lord say that he would come. At the outset, then, I state with what may be thought great boldness, but with the strongest conviction of truth, that the coming of Christ is the destruction of Jerusalem, and the close of the age, συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος, and that no other coming is spoken of in the Scriptures.

† If so, and the Apocalypse be written *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, it must be the work of some higher arch-enemy than Cerinthus, for it represents Christ as yet to come after the object for which he said he would come had been fulfilled.

And be it remembered, the proof of our Lord’s coming at

every eye shall see him ;’ and the like expressions, cannot surely be so well understood of any event as of the destruction of Jerusalem ; which *coming* was also spoken of in the Gospels ; and what other *coming* was there so speedy, and so conspicuous ?” Add to this, “*they also which pierced him,*” were to look upon him ; and who were they “*which pierced him*” but the Jews ?

that period does not depend upon the Apocalypse. That truth would have remained the same had the Apocalypse never been written. The Apocalypse only confirms the statements in the Gospels. It is only when viewed as written *after* that event that the whole question is encircled with irreconcilable difficulties. For if the Gospels and Epistles state explicitly that Christ was to come within a certain defined period, and for a certain defined object, and the Apocalypse represents him as yet to come, after that event had taken place, and that period passed away, not only is Scripture set against Scripture, but the whole of the sacred canon is involved in one irremediable mass of contradiction and mystery.

2. The woes of the Apocalypse (and I presume I may take it for granted that the Book from the opening of the first seal to the final consummation of the destruction of Babylon, is one unmixed and uninterrupted series of terrible calamity) are said to fall upon the dwellers in a particular land, upon the Princes and Lords, and merchants of a particular land, and upon a particular city.

These are described as "they that dwell on the earth,"¹ "οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς." "The kings of the earth," "βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς." "The great men of the earth," "μεγιστᾶνες τῆς γῆς." "The merchants of the earth," "ἔμποροι τῆς γῆς." "The great city which had dominion over the kings of the earth," "ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς."

Let us see first whether the woes of the Apocalypse descend upon "them that dwell on the earth."

This can be confirmed by numerous passages scattered everywhere throughout the Book, thereby proving that the Apocalypse embraces only one grand subject, and that the miseries about to fall on one particular people.

"Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth," (Rev.

¹ "They that dwell on the earth," ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς—in every passage this ought to be translated, "ON THE LAND," i.e. the land of Judæa. Compare Luke, xxi. 23.: "there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people,"—"Ἔσται γὰρ ἀνάγκη μεγάλη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, καὶ ὀργὴ ἐν τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ,"—where our translators, driven to the right meaning of the words by the qualifying clause, "this people," have translated ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς "in the land."

viii. 13.) "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea," (Rev. xii. 12.) "And there fell a noisome and a grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshipped his image," (Rev. xvi. 2.) Now the men who had "the mark of the beast, and who worshipped his image," are defined as "they that dwell on the earth." "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him," *i. e.* the beast, (Rev. xiii. 8.) "He . . . causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast," (Rev. xiii. 12.) "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth . . . saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image," (Rev. xiii. 14.) (Compare also Rev. iii. 10., Rev. vi. 10., Rev. xvii. 2., Rev. xvii. 8.) I trust then it will be admitted as an irrefragable position, that the woes of the Apocalypse were to fall upon a particular people specially marked out and defined as "Them that dwell on the earth."

Now who are "they that dwell on the earth?"

The words "the earth," "ἡ γῆ," are not unfrequently used in the Apocalypse in connection with other clauses which qualify their meaning, making it evident that no particular land is pointed out, but the earth generally. I would adduce in support of this such passages as the following:—"And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth," (Rev. v. 3.) ; "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea," (Rev. v. 13. So also Rev. xi. 6., xiv. 7., xviii. 1., xx. 11. &c.) In all which passages it is at once evident from the qualifying adjuncts that no particular land can be intended, but the earth generally as part of creation.

In some other passages, the obscurity of which does not admit of a positive interpretation, it is possible that the earth generally or a particular land may be intended. I allude to such texts as "The seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," (Rev. v. 6.); "The stars of heaven fell to the earth," (Rev. vi. 13.); "And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth," (Rev. x. 2.); although, if we bring our Lord's prophecies and the prevailing opinions of the Jews into the scale, it will seem most probable that a particular land was intended. But the words in question are sometimes found qualified by governing considerations which

define and determine their meaning, *and this is always the case*, when they are found in connection with the governing clause "they that dwell," "οἱ κατοικοῦντες." Then they have, and can have, only one meaning; then they refer only to one land and to one people; and this land and this people must be the land and people of Judæa.

This will be reduced to demonstration from a consideration of the passages in which these words occur.

They are found put in apposition and contradistinction to "every tongue and kindred, and people and nation," "πᾶσα φυλὴ καὶ γλῶσση, καὶ λαὸς καὶ ἔθνος." It is well known that one only land claimed this distinction; one only people asserted this separation from the Gentile world. The Greeks were not more anxious to be held distinct from the Barbarians, than the Jews from the heathen,—than "they that dwell on the earth," from the tongues, and kindreds, and peoples, and nations.

The first passage which I shall bring forward in proof of this is Rev. vii. 4., where the 144,000 are said to be sealed "of all the tribes of the children of Israel." By turning to Rev. xiv. 3., it will be found that the same 144,000 are said to be "*redeemed from the earth.*" These are contrasted (Rev. vii. 9.) with "a great multitude . . . of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues." Here it is evident that the 144,000 of all the tribes, defined as the "*redeemed from the earth,*" are put in apposition to "the great multitude . . . of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues." The inference is unavoidable that the writer of the Book intended to draw a distinction between Jew and Gentile, between the sealed "of all the tribes of the children of Israel," (and these tribes are enumerated by name in order to show that a literal Israel is intended,) and the gathered from "all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues;" and by comparing Rev. vii. 4. with Rev. xiv. 3. it is made matter of positive certainty that the "*redeemed from the earth*" are identical with the sealed from "all the tribes of the children of Israel." This at once gives us the position we contend for, that "the earth" is the land of Judæa.

Rev. xi. 9. 10. "And they of the people and kindreds and

tongues and nations shall see, &c. . . . *and they that dwell upon the earth* shall rejoice over them."

Rev. xiii. 7, 8. "And power was given unto him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, and *all that dwell upon the earth* shall worship him."

Rev. xiv. 6. "And I saw another angel . . . having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto *them that dwell on the earth*, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

In all these passages there is a marked antithesis between the Jew and the Gentile, a distinction evident to the simplest comprehension. The Jew is described by that title which belongs to him alone, and which is never used in this Book in any other sense but as defining that peculiar people who were separate from the Gentile world. The heathen, on the other hand, are appropriately distinguished by the name by which the Jew ever recognised them,—the one as "*they that dwell upon the earth*;" the other, as "*the nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and people*."

The same argument may be drawn from the consideration of those texts in which the expression "*the kings of the earth*" occurs, in contradistinction to other clauses which serve to define and particularise its meaning. And here again I should wish to take it for granted that the woes of the Apocalypse descend upon the "*kings of the earth*" as well as upon "*them that dwell on the earth*." This will not require any elaborate proof. Under the Sixth Seal the kings of the earth and the great men hide themselves from the approaching vengeance, calling upon the mountains and rocks, almost in the identical language predicted by our Lord, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." (Rev. vi. 16.) At the destruction of Great Babylon the kings of the earth "bewail and lament for her when they see the smoke of her burning." (Rev. xviii. 9.)

It will then hardly be denied that the woes of the Apocalypse come on princes and lords, who are called kings of the earth, as well as upon the inhabitants of the earth.

Is there then any clue by which we may discover who are meant by the kings of the earth? (Rev. xvi. 12, 14.) They are mentioned in opposition to the "*kings of the East*" and the

kings "of the whole world."¹ This is a very remarkable distinction. They are the princes of a particular land which maintained a separation from every other country, which held itself aloof from the "whole world" of imperial Rome, and the lands inhabited by the people of the East. This in the uniform language of history and Scripture can only be Judæa.

The same distinction is observable in Rev. xviii. 3. : "For all nations, ἔθνη, have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth, τῆς γῆς, have committed fornication with her." So also Rev. xxi. 24. : "And the nations, ἔθνη, of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth, τῆς γῆς, do bring their glory and honour into it."

It is most evident that the writer of the Apocalypse (a book everywhere abounding with the most forcible and magnificent contradistinctions and appositions) intended by these striking points of contrast to define and to determine the princes of that particular land which ever vaunted its superiority in point of privilege above the heathen world.

The same argument, which however I shall not now pursue, is applicable to the expression "the merchants of the earth," ἔμποροι τῆς γῆς, as contrasted with "all nations," πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Rev. xviii. 3. ; Rev. xviii. 23.).

I may now take it for granted that the woes of the Apocalypse descend upon a particular city as well as upon the inhabitants and princes of a particular land. Now that city (every-

¹ "The kings of the earth," τῆς γῆς, are not the kings of the Gentile nations, or they would be called "οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν" (Luke, xxii. 25.), and not "οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς." They are not identical with "οἱ δέκα βασιλεῖς . . . τοῦ θηρίου" (Rev. xvii. 12.) ; for these are not called "οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς." Nay, it is said of them that they shall hate the whore, "ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλείων τῆς γῆς;" it would be impossible for them to hate and destroy the "whore which reigneth over the kings of the earth," and be themselves "the kings of the earth." Added to this, Clement calls the king of Jericho "ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς γῆς," (Epist. i. 12.) ; and Herod and Pontius Pilate, the rulers of Judæa, are called "the kings of the earth" (Acts, iv. 26.) It is most evident that a distinction was intended to be made between "the kings of the East,"—"τῶν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου," defined by St. Clement to mean "ἀνατολικοὶ τόποι, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἀραβίαν," (Epist. i. ad Cor. 25.), "the kings of the whole world,"—τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης,—of Imperial Rome, — and "the kings of the earth,"—τῆς γῆς,—Judæa.

where mentioned in the Apocalypse as the subject of divine wrath) is defined as "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." If "they that dwell on the earth," as opposed to the heathen, can only be the Jewish people; if "the kings of the earth," as distinct from the kings of the East and of the whole world, can only be the princes of Judæa; then "the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" can only be Jerusalem.

It will be satisfactory to find that the same argument which we have as yet employed, is applicable to our present position; and that the city which is the object of the woes of the Apocalypse is ever held distinct from the cities of the heathen. Rev. xvi. 19. The city is contrasted with the cities of the nations: "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations, ἑθνῶν, fell, and Great Babylon came in remembrance before God."

Nothing can be more evident than that a marked contrast is here intended to be kept up between the great city which came into remembrance before God, and the cities of the nations, ἑθνη.

Rev. xi. 2.—"The holy city shall they (the Gentiles, ἑθνη) tread under foot." Or, according to St. Luke, xxi. 24.—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles." The distinction drawn between the Gentiles who should tread down "the holy city," and that city which alone could claim this unique title of separation, is so plain, that there hardly seemed a necessity for the author of the Apocalypse to render his meaning still more intelligible by defining that holy city as "the great city where also our Lord was crucified."—Rev. xi. 8.

In Rev. xvii. 1. mention is made of "the great whore," and "The many waters." In verses 15, 18, the "waters" are explained to mean "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," and "the woman" "the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Here is another clear point of antithesis between the metropolis of Judæa, over which "the kings of the earth" lament (Rev. xviii. 9.), and from whose approaching miseries "the kings of the earth" hide themselves (Rev. vi. 15.), and "the peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," of the heathen world; and it is worthy

of observation that this distinction is found in a passage which is a definition of the symbols of verse 1. and where it is evident that the author, as in his previous delineation of "the great city" by the significant phrase "*Where also our Lord was crucified,*" or of "the great dragon" by "*That old serpent called the Devil or Satan,*" intended to give an intelligible explanation of the symbols employed.

The argument then resolves itself into this:—*Either the woes of the Apocalypse have fallen upon this particular people, princes, and city, or they have yet to fall upon this particular people, princes, and city.*

For it cannot be too strongly stated that the terrific symbols of the Apocalypse do *not* fall upon the dwellers on the whole world, οἰκουμένη, upon the princes and merchants of the Gentiles, ἔθνη, or upon more than one city, and that, not a city of the nations, ἔθνη, but a city having dominion over the "kings of the earth." That from the beginning to the end of this mysterious volume one only people are the subjects of vengeance, and no vengeance is denounced on any other. One only city comes into remembrance before God; the princes and merchants of one only land experience the vengeance of the Almighty; and these are from first to last put into distinct contrast with the rest of mankind.

It will give me no trouble to show that they have so fallen. I answer at once, in the words of St. Barnabas, "So it is," "and it has come to pass as the Lord hath spoken"—"Γίνε-ται." "καὶ ἐγένετο καθ' ὃ ἐλάλησε κύριος." (S. Barnabæ Epist. 16.) This is so certain that nothing more need be said. It will not be so easy to show that the woes of the Apocalypse have *yet* to fall upon the Jewish people.

According to popular theories, the kings of the East, transformed into the people of the Jews, although the Jews never considered or spoke of themselves as the people of the East, are to be gathered unto their own land; Jewish millionaires are to repurchase Palestine; Jerusalem is to be rebuilt with a splendour hitherto unequalled; Christ is to come and reign on an earthly throne; Christianity is to go back into Judaism instead of Judaism being transfused into Christianity; and the Jews are to be the authors of the complete conversion of the human race.

What then becomes of the woes of the Apocalypse? In that case we must suppose that the language of this Book, not one word of which was to be taken from or added to, was ironical. We must reverse the dirge of this Book of blood into the Te Deum of thrilling victory. We must say "Peace, peace, peace!" and not "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth!"

But not to pursue this chain of thought further, I shall hope it may be considered proved that the woes of the Apocalypse descend upon a particular people, princes, and city. That this particular people, princes, and city, are contrasted with heathen nations, heathen princes, and heathen cities. That one only people, rulers, and city, claimed this isolated and peculiar position; and this people, dynasty, and city, are the people, dynasty, and city of Judæa.

That the whole argument may fairly be resolved into this: either the woes of the Apocalypse have fallen, or have yet to fall, upon this particular people, princes, and city; that there is evidence complete and satisfactory that the woes of the Apocalypse have fallen upon this land, princes, and city; that there is not evidence to justify the expectation they have yet to fall upon this particular people, princes, and city, inasmuch as the people are no more a people, and the city no more the holy city of God; and that even on the supposition the holy city and people should be once more restored, the whole foundation of such restoration proceeds on the principle *not* of their being subject to such woes as are predicted in the Apocalypse, but of their being once more the favoured people of God; their city once more the joy of the whole earth; the Saviour, whom they once rejected in their obstinacy, proclaiming from Zion his universal law; and the throne of the new and earthly Jerusalem filled by Him who is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

3. *St. John speaks of the Jews as still existing as a people, and of the temple and city of Jerusalem as still standing, which was not the case in the days of Domitian.*

In Rev. vii., the 144,000 are said to be sealed from the twelve¹ tribes of Israel. This supposes that Israel had not yet

¹ It may be objected, that ten of the twelve tribes did not return from the Assyrian captivity. But it is an answer to this to say, that in our Lord's

been led away captive into all nations ; for how could they be sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel, after the complete dispersion and annihilation of the Jewish people, which took place at the close of the Jewish dispensation ?

In Rev. xi. John is commissioned to “measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers.” The outer court he is to leave out, for it is to be “given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

This places the date of the book anterior to the destruction of the temple under Titus ; it is impossible that such a command could have been given, if “not one stone of the temple had remained upon another which had not been thrown down.”

Rev. xi. 8.—The bodies of the two witnesses are said to “lie in the street of the great city, *spiritually called* Sodom and Egypt.” Even this is not sufficient for St. John ; to remove all possibility of doubt as to what city is meant, he adds, “*Where also our Lord was crucified.*”¹

How can we avoid the conclusion, that Jerusalem was the city specified, and that the prediction was written before its desolation.

It is no answer to say, this is a “*petitio principii*,” begging the question, as it is called,—and that we are assuming that St. John means a literal people who are to be sealed, a literal temple, and a literal city. *They beg the question*, who, in defiance of plain statements to the contrary, assume that St. John does not mean the twelve tribes, or the Jewish temple, or the city “where our Lord was crucified.” True, the Apocalypse is an allegorical and symbolical composition, but under that symbol and allegory there is always a literal meaning. It is

time the Jewish people were still spoken of under the name of the twelve tribes. Thus we find him saying to his disciples, “Ye shall sit on twelve thrones judging the *twelve tribes* of Israel.” “Unto which promise our *twelve tribes*, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.”—Acts, xxvi. 7.

¹ The figurative language of the Apocalypse is often explained in the Apocalypse itself. Thus the city spiritually called Sodom and Egypt is defined as the “city where our Lord was crucified.” Thus the woman spiritually called “Babylon the Great,” is defined as “that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Thus “the Great Red Dragon,” is defined as that “Old Serpent called the Devil and Satan.” To my mind, it is as impious to doubt the literal meaning of these explanations, as to doubt the literal meaning given by our Lord of some of his parables.

nothing more or less than a revelation of things shortly to come to pass, clothed in a symbolic dress; and how absurd it would be to look only for a symbolic meaning in such a revelation. This view, if fully carried out, would reduce all truths and duties indicated by symbolic teaching into mere tropes and figures.

4. Rev. xvii.—The date of the Apocalypse is defined with great clearness and precision.

A woman is seen sitting on a “scarlet-coloured Beast.” That scarlet-coloured Beast is Rome.

The Beast has seven heads, which are explained to mean seven mountains, and also to signify seven kings.

“Five of these kings are fallen,” says St. John, “*and one is,*”—one was in existence at the time of the writing of the Apocalypse.

This fixes the date of the book to the reign of Nero. Five emperors had fallen when St. John was banished to Patmos by Nero, and St. John wrote the book during the reign of the sixth. It is worthy of notice, that, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning the emperors of Rome, Nero was the sixth emperor. Josephus tells us (and his testimony is very valuable, because it shows the manner in which the Jews of that day reckoned the Roman emperors) that “Augustus was the second emperor.”

Julius Cæsar, then, was the first; Augustus the second; Tiberius, third; Caius, or Caligula, fourth; Claudius, fifth: these were the five who had fallen, “*and one is,*”—Nero, the sixth, under whose reign of terrible persecution the Apocalypse was written.

This fixes the date of the Apocalypse completely.

Nero died A. D. 68; Jerusalem fell A. D. 70; consequently the Apocalypse must have been written previous to the destruction of Jerusalem.

5. Another argument which serves to corroborate the Neronian date of the Apocalypse may be drawn from the circumstances under which the book was written.

The most superficial reader of the book must see it was written in times of great and terrible persecution; and that one of the prominent designs of the book was to animate, encourage, confirm, and strengthen the Church under those persecutions.

The author of the book sets out with the statement, that he, their "companion and brother in tribulation," "was in the isle that is called Patmos, *for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*"

The addresses to the Seven Churches are full of exhortations to persevere under their fiery trials, and abound with promises of victory.

The Church of Ephesus is commended for its "*patience,*" and because it had "*not fainted.*" That of Smyrna is told to "fear none of those things which it should *suffer,*" and to be "*faithful unto death.*" Pergamos is praised, because it had not "denied the faith even in those days wherein Antipas *the faithful martyr was slain among them.*" Thyatira is lauded for its "*faith and patience.*" Sardis is bid "*to watch.*" It is promised to Philadelphia, that it should be kept from "*the hour of temptation,*" which should come on all the world." The warning is given to Laodicea, "*as many as I love I rebuke and chasten;*" and the Epistles to each of the Seven Churches conclude with a promise connected with the glories of the first resurrection to "*him that overcometh,*" an expression evidently alluding to martyrdom.

Nor are these encouragements to patience, and promises of victory, confined to the Seven Churches: the same views are everywhere scattered throughout the book.

Chap. vi. 9. discloses "*under the altar the souls of those slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*"

Chap. vii. 14. unfolds the glorious condition of those who had come out "*of great tribulation,*" and had washed their robes, and had made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In Chap. xvii., Great Babylon is said to be "*drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*"

Chap. xx. represents the "*souls of those beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God,*" living and reigning with Christ 1,000 years.

It is plain from these encouragements to perseverance, and from these promises of reward to those who should be "*faithful unto death,*" that the Apocalypse was written in the midst of a furious and savage persecution, and that one of its principal

objects was to support and animate the Church under this persecution. *Now were these the circumstances of the Church under the reign of Nero?*

Orosius says :—"Nero first persecuted the Christians at Rome by torture and death, and he commanded that *in all the provinces*¹ they should be tormented with the like persecution."—*Historiæ*, vii. 7.

Tertullian :—"Consult your edicts, (*commentarios vestros*), there you will find that Nero was the first who savagely persecuted this sect, then chiefly springing up at Rome, with the imperial sword.—*Apol.* v.

Eusebius :—"Nero . . . began to take up arms against that very religion which acknowledges the one supreme God. . . . he was the first of the emperors that displayed himself an enemy of piety towards the Deity. . . . thus Nero publicly announcing himself as the chief enemy of God, was led on in his fury to slaughter the Apostles ; Paul is therefore said to have been beheaded at Rome, and Peter to have been crucified under him."—*Eccles. Hist.* ii. 25.

Sulpicius Severus speaks of Nero as first endeavouring to extinguish the name of Christians : "The (Christian) religion was forbidden by the enactment of laws (*datis legibus*) and by edicts published (*edictis propositis*, the *commentarios vestros* of Tertullian), it was lawful for no one openly to be a Christian."—*Historiæ Sacræ*, ii. 28.

Observe.—No Roman emperor had hitherto persecuted Christianity ; no public edicts had been issued against the disciples of Jesus. But now the "fiery trial" began in earnest—"the hour of temptation came which was to try all that dwell on the earth." According to our Lord's prediction, the furnace was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, in the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. Apostacy, the consequence of this furious persecution, rose up of so horrid a kind, that the ties of nature were forgotten in the severity of the affliction,—the apostacy which our Lord said should precede his advent, and to which St. Paul refers (2 Thess. ii. 2.) : "For that day shall not come except there

¹ This is an answer to the statement that Nero's persecution was confined to the city of Rome, and which would make out that St. John could not have been banished to Patmos during the reign of Nero.

come a falling away first"—'Εὰν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποκατασία πῶτον, *the falling away*—the well-known apostacy respecting which the Lord had forewarned his Church.

"And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another, and many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."—Matt. xxiv. 10, 11, 12.

"Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that shall endure unto the end the same shall be saved."—Mark, xiii. 12, 13.

It is no wonder that the later epistles of the New Testament should abound with premonitory warnings and exhortations to courage and perseverance under the coming sorrows, and that the Christian converts should be admonished "not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which was to try them, as though some strange thing happened to them."—1 Peter, iv. 12.

6. To this it may be added, that reference appears to be made to the Revelation in the Epistles of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. James.¹ It is supposed that allusion is made to the

¹ "The Apocalypse seems to be alluded to in the Epistles of Peter and that to the Hebrews, and therefore to have been written before them. Such allusions in the Epistle to the Hebrews I take to be the discourses concerning the high priest in the heavenly tabernacle, who is both priest and king, as was Melchizedec; and those concerning the Word of God, with the sharp two-edged sword; the *Sabbatismos*, or millennial rest; the earth, whose end is to be burnt, suppose by the lake of fire; the judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries; the heavenly city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; the cloud of witnesses; Mount Zion; Heavenly Jerusalem; general assembly; spirits of just men made perfect—namely, by the resurrection; and the shaking of heaven and earth and removing them, that the new heaven, new earth, and new kingdom, which cannot be shaken, may remain. In the first of Peter occur these—'The Revelation of Jesus Christ,' twice or thrice repeated: 'the blood of Christ, as of a lamb fore-ordained before the foundation of the world;' 'the spiritual building in Heaven;' 'an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us, who are kept unto the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time;' 'the royal priesthood;' 'the holy priesthood;' 'the judgment beginning at the house of God;' and 'the Church at Babylon.' These are, indeed, obscure allusions; but the second Epistle, from the 19th verse of first chapter to the end, seems to be a con-

Apocalypse, 2 Peter i. 19., where it is said :—" We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." It is singular that St. Peter is speaking of the second advent, " the power and coming," *δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν*, of the Lord Jesus, and he says that not only were they, Peter, James, and John, eye-witnesses of the glory which he displayed on Tabor, but that they had a " more sure word " of prophetic development of His

tinued commentary upon the Apocalypse. There, in writing to the Churches in Asia, to whom John was commanded to send this prophecy, he tells them they ' have a more sure word of prophecy,' to be heeded by them ' as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in their hearts ;' and then, in the second, he proceeds to describe, out of this sure word of prophecy, how there should arise in the Church false prophets or false teachers, expressed collectively in the Apocalypse by the name of the false prophet, who should ' bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them,' which is the character of Antichrist : ' and many,' saith he, ' shall follow their lusts ;' they that dwell on the earth shall be deceived by the false prophet, and be made drunk with the wine of the whore's fornication, ' by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be blasphemed ;' for the beast is full of blasphemy ; ' and through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandise of you ;' for these are the merchants of the earth, who trade with the great whore, and their merchandise is all things of price, with the bodies and souls of men ; ' whose judgment lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.' ' These, as natural brute beasts,'—the ten-horned beast, and two-horned beast, or false prophet—' made to be taken and destroyed,'—in the lake of fire, —' blaspheme the things they understand not ;' ' they count it pleasure to riot in the day-time, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you, having eyes full of adulteries ;' for the kingdoms of the beast live deliciously with the great whore, and the nations are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. They ' are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.' ' These are,' not fountains of living water, but ' wells without water ;' not such clouds of saints as the two witnesses ascend in, but ' clouds that are carried with a tempest,' &c. Thus doth the author of this Epistle spend all the second chapter in describing the qualities of the Apocalyptic beasts and false prophet ; and then, in the third, he goes on to describe their destruction more fully, and the future kingdom. He saith, that because the coming of Christ should be long deferred, they should scoff, saying, ' Where is the promise of his coming ?' Then he describes the sudden coming of the day of the Lord upon them, ' as a thief in the night,' which is the Apocalyptic phrase ; and the millennium, or thousand years, which are with God but as a day ; the passing away of the old heavens and earth, by a conflagration in the lake of fire ; and our looking ' for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'—Sir I. Newton.

powerful coming, and that this was to be their guide “until the day dawned and the day-star, *φωσφόρος* (used of the first resurrection, Rev. ii. 28.) arose in their hearts.” It is true this may refer to the prophetic declarations of our Lord in the Gospels, but it applies more closely to “the revelation,” *Ἀποκάλυψις*, of Jesus Christ made known unto John.

So Cor. xv. 52. :—“Behold I shew you a mystery,—we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last* trump.” We turn to the Apocalypse, and find that the sounding of the seventh and last trump is “the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great.”—Rev. xi. 18. Six trumpets had already been sounded, but not till the sounding of the seventh and last is the mystery of God finished,—the mystery spoken of by St. Paul: “Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last* trump.” How did St. Paul know this should take place at the *last* trump, except from the Apocalypse, *for it is no where else revealed in Scripture*. So St. James speaks of “the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” (James, i. 12.) And as this is not mentioned by our Lord in the Gospels, it is by no means improbable but that St. James learnt this from the Apocalypse, (Rev. ii. 10.).

This reference to the Apocalypse in the Epistles, like the evidence afforded to the existence of the true Apocalypse by the false Apocalypses¹ ascribed to Peter, Paul, Cerinthus, and others, not only confirms the position of the early date, but shows that it was highly prized in those last and perilous times, and that as

¹ “The Neronian date is confirmed also by the many false Apocalypses, as those of Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, Elias, and Cerinthus, written in imitation of the true one. For, as the many false Gospels, false Acts, and false Epistles, were occasioned by the true ones,—and the writing many false Apocalypses, and ascribing them to Apostles and Prophets, argues that there was a true Apostolic one in great request with the first Christians,—so this true one may well be supposed to have been written early, that there may be room in the Apostolic age for the writing of so many false ones afterwards, and fastening them upon Peter, Paul, Thomas, and others, who were dead before John.”—Sir I. Newton.

a prophetic vision of coming events, it answered those purposes of warning and encouragement which it was intended to serve. There cannot be the slightest doubt but that the warnings of the Apocalypse were perfectly intelligible to the Jewish Christians of those days. They could not fail to understand that its woes were about to descend upon that particular people, and princes, and city, so unmistakeably distinguished from the people, princes, and cities of the Gentiles. They could have had no misgivings as to who were meant by "they that dwell on the earth," "the kings of the earth," "the merchants of the earth," and "the city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." If we add to this the extraordinary fact that the prophecies of our Lord relative to the destruction of Jerusalem are not recorded by St. John in his Gospel, although he was one of those four who asked him privately "Tell us when shall these things be," which can be best accounted for by the circumstance of a special Revelation having rendered such a detail unnecessary,—the abundant Hebraisms of the Apocalypse proving that the writer had only lately come out of Judæa,—the continual mention of a city, defined as "*the holy city*," "*the beloved city*," which can only mean Jerusalem,—the desolation of this city so graphically foretold, which corresponds with the desolation of no other city so completely as Jerusalem,—and, not least of all, the utter impossibility of any intelligible system of interpretation being found (as the history of the exegesis of this Book abundantly testifies), except that which proceeds upon the principle of the Neronian date,—this combined, will, it is hoped, form so strong a phalanx of internal evidence respecting the question of the date, as to leave no reasonable doubt but that the Apocalypse was written previous to the destruction of Jerusalem.

To recapitulate this evidence. It appears certain that the book was written before Christ came to destroy Jerusalem; that it was written *only just before* that event took place, for the Saviour continually repeats the expression, "Behold I come quickly;" that it is a description of calamities which either have fallen, or are yet to fall, upon a particular people and city, and those the people and city of the Jews; that it was written before the dispersion of the Jewish people, for 144,000 are sealed from the twelve tribes; before the destruction of the Temple,

for John is commanded to measure the Temple ; before the desolation of the city, for the bodies of the two witnesses lie in the πλατεία, the Broad Street of the city "*where our Lord was crucified*;" that it was written during the reign of the sixth Roman emperor Nero, and under circumstances of unwonted and terrible persecution, such as characterised Nero's reign. If you add to this, the interpretation about to be laid before you, in which every symbol of the Apocalypse finds an explanation more or less clear, not roaming over thousands of years, but confined and narrowed down to the three years and a half of the Jewish war, I trust you will be disposed to acknowledge that I have not rashly adopted the theory of the Neronic date, and that instead of seeking in the Apocalypse a history of the world and of the Church, from the commencement of Christianity down to the end of time, I have sufficient reason for preferring to regard the book in the light in which it is presented to us by the unerring Spirit of God.

"The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass.*"—Rev. i. 1.

"The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants *the things which must shortly be done.*"—Rev. xxii. 6.

"Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, *for the time is at hand.*"—Rev. xxii. 10.

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things unto you *in the churches.*"—Rev. xxii. 16.

"He which testifieth these things, saith, *surely I come quickly.*"—Rev. xxii. 20.

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein, *for the time is at hand.*"—Rev. i. 3.

And here at the very outset I would call attention to the fact recorded in the Apocalypse itself, that the book opens with a declaration that it is the revelation of events "*which must shortly come to pass,*" and closes with the most clear and positive statements to the same effect.

I desire this point may be kept in mind. If the explanation offered be not one and continuous, if the prophecy cannot be interpreted as a whole, and if the explanation given, not of

particular chapters, but of the whole book, is not found to suit the date and age of the Apocalypse, *and no other*, the principle of such interpretation must be defective, and the right chord has not been struck. If, on the other hand, an interpretation can be offered, not of isolated passages, but of the whole subject, and that interpretation not scattered over many centuries, but referring solely to "the things which were shortly to come to pass," I do not see how the conclusion is to be avoided that such an interpretation is more in character with the aim and object of the book, than any other which includes the history of distant periods.

Oh that such an interpretation may now be found—that truth may prevail above error, and fact above fiction; that prejudice, especially prejudice against the errors of the Romish Church, and if possible, *all previously formed opinions*, might be laid aside, and we might now examine this book as if we had never heard of it before!

Let us not be overwhelmed because great names have pronounced the book unintelligible. Let us not be frightened at the saying of Scaliger, "Calvinus sapit, quod in Apocalypsin non scripsit"—Calvin showed his wisdom in not writing on the Apocalypse. Great names often hide great errors. The truth may yet be found. I can never believe the Apocalypse was unintelligible to those to whom it was addressed. I could never suppose, with Moses Stuart, that all Christians belonging to the seven Churches of Asia did not understand it. I think they *must* have done so. If it was a *revelation*, it must have been intelligible. If it was addressed to Christ's servants, it must have been intelligible to *them*; and if it was a revelation "of things shortly to come to pass," it must have had a specific reference to the *peculiar circumstances of the Church at that period*.

Many of our Lord's parables were difficult to be understood even by the disciples; many of them he was obliged to explain to them privately. But at the period of which we are now speaking, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were still abundant, and surely that Holy Spirit would enable them to understand their Lord's words. These visions were among "the mysteries of the kingdom of God," the knowledge of which was given to the disciples; and "visions" like these

may have not been uncommon, during the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.¹

May that Holy Spirit guide and direct us in our attempt at the further elucidation of this wonderful book,—the book of which Luther once said, there was no Christ in it, but which he afterwards found to be all Christ from the beginning to the end! I do not believe any one will ever have a clear understanding of the New Testament till he has studied the Apocalypse; and by studying the Apocalypse I do not mean studying the Apocalypse by the help of the Apocalypse, but by comparing the Apocalypse with the rest of the New Testament Scriptures.²

And the more such an one studies it, the more he will bless God that such a glorious revelation of Christ's "appearing and kingdom" has been made known unto men, the higher he will rise in his aspiration to share its transcendent joys, the deeper in his own mind will he realise the blessedness especially promised to students of this book:—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand."

¹ "It must be considered that though such visions, being no longer continued to these latter ages, may warrantably be despised in the pretenders of the present days: yet we cannot doubt but that at the time this book (Shepherd of St. Hermas) was written, the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were very frequent, and we need not question but that such revelations, too, among the rest, were communicated to holy men for the benefit of the Church."—Archbishop Wake's Preliminary Discourse on the Shepherd of St. Hermas, p. 383.

² "Scripture itself seems to have wanted some epitome which should connect its predictions with their final fulfilment with regard to the new dispensation, and thus to present an entire whole to the reader of those and future times. Such a work, as the Book of the Revelation, therefore, seems not only to have been wanted for the Churches of those times, but also for those of every future period, a work in which the believer could view the whole counsel of God completed, and himself made a member of that household whose foundations had been laid by God himself from the very beginning."—Lee on Prophecy, p. 293.

LECTURE II.

THE SEALED BOOK.

REVELATION, CHAP. V.

1. And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3. And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth in all the earth.

7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation:

10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands:

12. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

14. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

OUR first Lecture embraced the subject of the date of the Apocalypse. We endeavoured to show that the voice of antiquity left the question respecting the date an open one, and one that could only be decided by the internal testimony of the book itself. We then proceeded to prove that the internal evidence of the book establishes the date as anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is of the greatest importance to understand this clearly, for the question of the date settles the interpretation of the Apocalypse; it is the key-stone of the arch, the chief corner-stone of the whole foundation. *If the Domitianic date be the true one*, the Beast may be the Pope, Great Babylon may be Rome, the three Frogs may be France, and the Unclean Spirit Tractarianism; for the book is of so highly figurative and allegorical a character, and the nature of its imagery so general, that it may be applied to almost any event which has affected the world or the Church, and it would be strange if, in a review of events from the days of Domitian to the present time, some circumstances could not be found which seem more or less clearly to coincide with the Apocalyptic predictions. *If the Neronic date be the true one*, of which there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind, and of which the interpretation about to be offered will afford some additional evidence, then there must be no suppositions, no enigmas, no probable coincidences. As far as the elucidation of this book is concerned, we may burn Gibbon, and allow the Pope to rest in peace.

An interpretation must be found of the symbols of the Apocalypse in the brief space of time (whatever that was) which intervened between the banishment to Patmos and the destruction of Jerusalem. We must have no roaming over the history of 2,000 years; no transferring of the scene of the apocalyptic predictions from Judæa to Paris or Constantinople. *There and then* every symbol must receive its accomplishment—*there and then* a meaning must be found for every figure. This renders the task all the more difficult; but if that difficulty can be overcome, it brings us to the conclusion that we have found the right clue.

Should a person conversant with the motions of the heavenly bodies predict the appearance of a comet, on a certain day of a

certain year, and should his predictions be realised, we should give him credit for knowledge of the principles of his science, which led him to fix accurately the time of the predicted phenomenon. But should some person make a rough guess that a comet would be visible during the next fifty years, even if his prediction did come to pass, we should not give him credit for any extraordinary sagacity.

So with regard to the principle of the interpretation of the Apocalypse. According to the one system, every symbol must meet with its fulfilment at a certain fixed time; according to the other, the period during which the symbols are to receive their fulfilment is almost unlimited. The one is the prediction of the comet on the certain day; the other the prediction of the same phenomenon at any time during the fifty years.

Before entering upon the subject of our present Lecture, I would wish to define the principle upon which I shall endeavour to be guided in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. It needs no argument to show that the Apocalypse is a highly figurative and allegorical composition. Now, the great fault of interpreters in explaining allegory is the attempt to carry minute explanations too far. This has been the cause of irremediable mischief, and has originated a host of absurdities and errors.

There is always a Divine truth under each symbol,—there is always a Divine basis under the allegory,—and this is the truth to be prominently brought forward, the remaining parts of the symbol being only helps to finish out the picture.

This is the case with all allegorical composition.¹ Take for instance the vision which told Nebuchadnezzar of his coming degradation and dethronement. *Dan. iv. 10.*

How absurd it would be to insist on a literal interpretation of every particular of this vision—to compare Nebuchadnezzar to a literal tree reaching to heaven, in which was meat for all—to suppose that the beasts of the field must literally get away from its branches—that the literal stump was to be left in the

¹ Take an instance of this in the description of our Lord, chap. v., as “a Lamb which had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes.” How absurd it would be to render this symbol literally, or to suppose that the heavenly appearance of our Lord was that of a Lamb.

earth—that a literal band of iron or brass was to be bound round him—that his heart was to be literally taken from his body, and changed into the heart of a beast.

The general idea is clear enough, that for his pride he should be condemned to lose his kingdom and his reason, and to fancy himself a beast for seven years.

“If in Zedekiah’s horns of iron we are to understand not only their strength, which is intimated by the iron, but also the nature of the iron, whether it be cast iron or steel, and the like, and also their shape, their mode of fixture to the head, &c. Then there will be no unity of design in the subject, and by dwelling on these inferior particulars, we shall diminish or destroy the effect evidently intended by the whole, and finally perhaps lose entire sight of the intention of the prophet. In the great image of Daniel no objection can be made to the consideration of the toes being partly of iron, and partly of clay, for this was evidently intended to show that a mixture of strength and weakness should exist in the thing predicted, but we contend that this was the main and principal thing inculcated, and not that these toes should be counted and dissected so as to intimate a definite number of other particulars.”—Lee on Prophecy, p. 223.

Take again our Lord’s allegories or parables,—for instance, that of a “certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.”

The general idea of God’s choice and protection of his favoured people is sufficiently clear; but if you push and strain the allegory, and endeavour to find a particular meaning for each individual expression, for his “planting the vineyard, hedging it round about, digging the winepress, building the tower,” you force the parable, and are in danger of losing the main and prominent truth it was intended principally to convey.

It is just as if some person explaining the parable of the good Samaritan were to insist chiefly on the direction the traveller took, viz. from Jerusalem to Jericho; the minute circumstances of his falling among thieves, and being robbed; the Samaritan’s setting him on his own beast, and taking care of

him, &c., instead of the great principle of benevolence to our fellow-creatures which is therein inculcated. "It is just as if some person, contemplating a beautiful picture, were to put aside the main features of the portrait, and to consider the trees and the water and mountains which make up the background, and fill up the sketch, as the chief objects worth his consideration."

So with regard to any explanation of this book ; it is a book of symbol and allegory : the basis of each symbol is the point to be aimed at, the rest is merely subsidiary. This is the principle upon which we shall proceed—under each symbol we shall hope to find a literal fact which is the basis of that symbol ; it does not follow, because the clothing of the symbol is figurative, that the basis of the symbol should be figurative also : most of our Lord's parables were highly figurative, yet there was no mistaking the literal sense they were intended to convey. Let us then expect to find in this book, just as in our Lord's parables, literal truths clothed in a symbolic dress ; let us treat them in the same way as we should treat our Lord's parables ; let us have no surmises, no queries, no enigmas ; let us not set ourselves afloat upon a boundless ocean of conjecture without rudder, compass, mast, or sail. If it was deemed necessary that the Apocalypse should be written, we may suppose it was necessary that the Apocalypse should be read ; and if it was necessary that the Apocalypse should be read, we may suppose that it was perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was addressed ; *we cannot suppose that it was necessary to send a key with the Apocalypse*. If it is mysterious and unintelligible to us, one principal reason is, we cannot put ourselves in the situation of those to whom it was addressed, and we are destitute of that contemporary information which would explain its difficulties.

It is not my intention to explain the three first chapters of the Apocalypse, containing the vision of the glorified Saviour to St. John in Patmos, and the Epistles which John was commanded to send to the Seven Churches of Asia. It must not, however, be thought, because of this omission, that any system of chronology is supposed to exist in the Apocalypse. Nothing can be more evident than that the Epistles to the Seven Churches are closely interwoven with the rest of the book,

and I may also observe that the vices condemned in the Churches, particularly those of Pergamos and Thyatira, when compared with the first general council of Acts, xv., commanding the Gentile Churches to “abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood,” while no mention is made of the later gnostic heresies alluded to in the Gospel and Epistles of St. John, give evidence of a very normal state of the Church. All I shall attempt to do is to give a brief summary of these chapters, with a view of showing that the Epistles to the Seven Churches are not an isolated portion of the Book of Revelation distinct from the rest of the prophecy, and that the Apocalypse does not embrace a variety of subjects, but is one grand and continuous whole.

Now it is remarkable, that to each of the Seven Churches there is a warning given of our Lord’s immediate advent, and a promise, connected with the glories of the first resurrection, held out to him that overcame.

Ephesus.—“I will come unto thee quickly.”

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.” Rev. ii. 5. 7.

Smyrna.—“I will give thee a crown of life.”¹

“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” Rev. ii. 10, 11.

Pergamos.—“I will come unto thee quickly.”

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.” Rev. ii. 16, 17.

Thyatira.—“Hold fast till I come.”

“He that overcometh, and keepeth my works *unto the end*, (compare “Then shall the end come,” Matt. xxiv. 14), to him will I give power over the nations.” Rev. ii. 25, 26.

Sardis.—“I will come on thee as a thief.”

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.” Rev. iii. 3—6.

¹ “The crown of life” was to be given “at that day,” and “his appearing.”—Compare 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Philadelphia. — “Behold I come quickly.”

“He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” Rev. iii. 11, 12.

Laodicea. — “Behold I stand at the door and knock.”

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.” Rev. iii. 20, 21.

And to each of the Seven Churches these warnings and promises are declared to be the voice of the Spirit. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”

This is the one only theme pursued throughout the Book. It begins by saying that Christ is coming immediately; it ends with the same theme, “Surely I come quickly.” It begins by warning the Seven Churches of this speedy advent; it closes by saying, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things *in the Churches.*” It begins by promising to the martyrs, to them that overcame, the glories of the first resurrection; it ends by disclosing the vision of “the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Rev. xx. 4.

This is the key to the whole book. Our Lord appears to St. John, directs him to tell the Churches that he is about to come immediately, and then details the object and nature of his coming. Bear this in mind as the scope and the aim of the Revelation, and every difficulty will vanish. The book will be no longer unintelligible. Its meaning will be as evident to you as it must have been to those who first heard its warnings. They *must* have perfectly known that “the earth” meant Judæa; “the dwellers in the earth,” the Jews; “the kings of the earth,” the princes of Palestine; “the merchants of the earth,” the traffickers of the Holy Land; “the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,” the metropolis, the royal city. They *must* have thoroughly known, that “the whole world” signified the Roman Empire; “the kindreds, and tongues, and people, and nations,” the Gentiles who were not Jews; “the kings of the whole world,” the Roman princes; “the kings of the East,” the monarchs about Euphrates. Not a doubt could have occurred to their minds as to

what was intended by the "cities of the nations," *i. e.* Gentile cities; or what city was unmistakably distinguished from every other city, as "the great city," "the holy city," "the beloved city," the city which the Gentiles should tread down. Bear this in mind, and much of the difficulty of the Apocalypse will disappear. You will discover that its apparent obscurity is the result of a want of sufficient attention to the habits of thinking and speaking of that age, an imperfect apprehension of the aim and scope of the book, and an indistinct and confused perception of the persons to whom its warnings were addressed. This, added to the mass of crude commentaries with which the book has been overlaid, has well nigh extinguished every particle of truth.

Bear then in mind the simple fact that the woes of the Apocalypse descend upon a particular people, princes, and city, and you will soon discard as untenable the infatuated theory that a Revelation revealed nothing, and that a portion of those Divine scriptures which were written for our learning, and to the readers of which a peculiar and especial blessing was promised, has never been intelligible. You will scout the monstrous idea, that the interpretation of a prophecy of events "which must *shortly* come to pass," should have been kept in abeyance until the nineteenth century. You will perceive that the Apocalypse not only does not aim to be a record of civil and ecclesiastical history down to the end of time,—not only affords no theme for the fabulous expositions which are a disgrace to the Biblical knowledge of our generation, and which, it is to be feared, are deluding the souls of thousands,—but that it was the Revelation of our Lord's immediate coming vouchsafed in mercy to the Church of that day. That its warning voice was clear, distinct, and perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was addressed; that the difficulties which have so long encompassed the book are of man's creating, and not of the Spirit of God; that its notes of deep and solemn terror must have found an echo in the hearts of "them that dwelt on the earth," "the kings of the earth," "the merchants of the earth," and in the palaces of that "great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" that the Jew of that day and generation must have listened to its call of watchfulness and preparation, as to a call pregnant with

significant meaning to him especially:—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for *the time is at hand.*" Rev. i. 3.

With this brief notice of the three first chapters let us proceed to examine chapters iv., v., and these can only briefly be touched upon, the real difficulty of the Apocalypse commencing with the opening of the first seal, chapter vi.

After the exhortation to the Seven Churches respecting the immediate advent of Christ, the nature of that advent is next disclosed to St. John. He is caught up to heaven, or rapt in a trance, and sees the vision of the Almighty, and hears the opening of the Sealed Book, which unfolds that advent under seals, trumpets, and vials. "After this I looked and behold a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter."

There is a point of great moment with regard to the system of future interpretation, involved in those words which are translated by the word "hereafter."¹ The original is "*μετὰ ταῦτα*," "after these things." Now the question is not, what do these words signify as they stand in our English translation, but what do they signify in the sense in which they are used in the Apocalypse? In the very same verse, these words occur again, and they also occur frequently elsewhere in the Apocalypse, and they always have one and the same signification, and that is, *they refer to something which was to happen consecutively and immediately.*

The words, which in the beginning of this verse are translated, "after this," are the same which in the end of the verse are translated "hereafter." Should it be objected that the last clause translated "hereafter" is qualified by the expression "things which must be hereafter," the very same clause is explained in Rev. xxii. 6. as "things which must shortly be done."²

¹ "*Postea inquit vidi; post ipsam utique visionem, se alteram memorat vidisse, non gestorum est diversum tempus sed visionum, ac si quis unam rem diversis modis enarret.*" — Primasius.

² Compare "*ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα*" — Rev. iv. 1., with "*ἃ δεῖ γε-*

Dr. Cumming tells us, that the whole of the Apocalypse was seen by St. John in one literal Lord's day of twelve hours, and that Lord's day, he says, was a "miniature chronology of the world." But if the words translated "after this" and "hereafter" are the same, as undoubtedly they are, we cannot interpret one of a period of twelve hours, and the other of a period of 2,000 years.

In the very verse, then, in which the words translated "hereafter" are met with, we have the same words signifying an event which happened immediately, or at any rate at no great interval of time.

No argument can be built on the notion that the words translated "hereafter," mean events about to happen in future ages; on the contrary, they are always used in the Apocalypse to signify *events immediately about to take place*.

This cuts at the very root of that interpretation which supposes the Apocalypse to be a prophecy extending to remote ages; on the contrary, it asserts that it is the revelation of events soon about to take place: it assists to overthrow the fallacy that because "the Church under the Christian dispensation is higher in dignity than the Church under the Mosaic economy," that therefore it ought to "*enjoy equal counsel and consolation of a prophetic character*." ¹ But, it may be asked, if it was necessary in order to the perfection of the new dispensation that "it should enjoy equal counsel and consolation of a prophetic character;" why then does it not enjoy equal consolation of a miraculous character? How is it that miracles are no longer known, although prophecy is supposed to exist? How is it that "tongues" have ceased, although "prophecy" has not failed? What argument can be advanced to show that the exercise of one extraordinary gift should outlive the rest? If prophecy is not lost, then what has become of that angelic interference once so visible in the affairs of men, or of the voice of the Eternal, heard at intervals, amidst the hushed awe of wonder-stricken mortals? And above all, how comes it that these prophetic declarations were not understood in the ages to which they are supposed to have referred? One

ρίσθαι ἐν τάχει" — Rev. xxii. 6.; "μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον" — Rev. vii. 9.; "ἔρχονται ἐπὶ δύο οὐαὶ μετὰ ταῦτα" — Rev. ix. 12.

¹ Wordsworth's Babylon.

would imagine the scope and aim of prophecy would be to give premonitory warning and consolation until fulfilled ; and when fulfilled, to establish in the minds of those who witnessed its fulfilment a sense of the Divine power and wisdom which could "see the end from the beginning." But if the ages to which the prophecies of the Apocalypse are supposed to refer saw nothing of the adaptation of these prophecies to their own case ; if, before their accomplishment, they neither answered the end of warning or consolation ; if, after their accomplishment, they did not serve to manifest the prescience of the Almighty ; if the Christians, who lived before the days of Luther, never discovered that the Beast was the Pope, or that Great Babylon was Papal Rome ; if those parties, who ought to have been much more interested in the question than we can possibly be, knew nothing of the irruption of the Mahometan locusts, and of the Turks battering down the walls of Constantinople ; if no one, nowhere, before the age of Bishop Newton, Mede, and the Elliotts and Cummings who have expanded them, had the slightest idea of that system of interpretation, which is unhappily so much in vogue in the present day, it may well be questioned whether *such* prophecy be not an isolation in the general tenor of Divine pre-communications, or whether *such* prophecy has answered the end that prophecy generally was intended to serve.

With the closing scenes of the Jewish dispensation, all extraordinary gifts, and amongst the rest prophecy, appear to have ceased. "The prophet and the unclean spirit" simultaneously "passed out of the land," Zech. xiii. 2. "The law and the prophets were *until John*, from that time the kingdom of God was to be preached." The Holy Spirit was to be given, not to solitary individuals at great intervals of time, but to be poured out upon all flesh, and on the disciples, among the rest, not with a view of making them prophets, but of bringing "all things to their remembrance whatsoever Christ had said unto them ;" and of showing them things to come," (*τὰ ἐρχόμενα*, the coming things,) John, xvi. 13. Our Saviour's prophecies referred chiefly to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the events which should accompany his coming. No such an idea appears to have entered his mind as to chronicle down in prophetic visions the fortunes of

his Church to the end of time. Moreover, had prophecy been a characteristic of the New Dispensation, it would not have ceased with the predictions of the Apocalypse. *A succession of prophets* raised up from time to time, as under the Mosaic economy, would have been the guides and comforters of the Church. The foreshadows of coming events, as under the old dispensation, would have been prophetically announced by men who immediately preceded the times to which the events referred. Impending calamities and approaching deliverances would have found their contemporaneous predictors. A Jeremiah or an Ezekiel would have spoken of a captivity near at hand ; or a Haggai or a Zechariah of a restoration soon to be accomplished. Adequate supplies of prophetic inspiration, suited to the times which called them forth, would have met national emergencies ; and the fallacy need not have been propounded, which, claiming for the Christian Church "equal counsel and consolation of a prophetic character" with that of the Jewish Church, is driven to transmute a prophecy of "things which must shortly be done," into the history of the world and of the Church down to the end of time ; and to claim for a highly allegorical book, like the Book of the Revelation, only intelligible when viewed in the light of a past economy, the unenviable and the unhappy distinction that it is the only "*equal counsel and consolation of a prophetic character*" which a superior dispensation is supposed to possess.

I must now very briefly introduce the scene depicted in this vision, and a glorious scene it is. The first object whom St. John beholds is the Deity. "Behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne ; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone : and there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald."

The jasper, a stone of various colours—purple, green, cærulean ; the sardine, a blood-red stone ; and the iris, or rainbow, round about the throne softening, by its many-coloured hues, the light which none might look upon. It is impossible for human language to describe more impressively the glory of the Godhead.¹

¹ Compare Ezekiel, i. 26, 27, 28.

“Round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

But why twenty-four? Some say, because there were twelve tribes of Israel, and twelve Apostles; and the number twenty-four would represent the Jewish and Christian Church; some, because the worship of the Jewish temple was divided into twenty-four courses of priests, and the temple on earth was made after the pattern of the heavenly temple.

One point alone is clear: they owe their high position to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; for they are represented as saying, “thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”¹

“Out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and voices, and thunderings.” The scenery is exceedingly grand and terrific; indicative of the glory and presence of God. So, when God descended upon Sinai, there were “thunders and lightnings,” “and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud.”

“Seven lamps were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.”

Some suppose that the Holy Spirit is here designated, “the number 7,” as Josephus says, “being a number of dignity among the Jews.” Others think they refer to the “seven angels which stand before God” (the angels alluded to by our Lord), “Whosoever will confess me before men, him will I also confess before the angels of God.” So St. Paul to Timothy—“I charge thee before God and the elect angels.” In the Apocryphal Book of Tobit, the angel Raphael says, “I am one of the seven angels that enter into the presence of the Holy One.” “The sea of glass before the throne like unto crystal,” the same as “the sea of glass mingled with fire,” of chap. xv., is, possibly, the lucid and shining pavement before the throne. “There² was under his feet, as it were, a pavement of sapphire, and, as it were, the body of heaven in its clearness.”

“And, in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts³, full of eyes, before and behind.”

¹ Rev. v. 9.

² Exodus, xxiv. 9, 10.

³ Ζῴα, “living creatures.”

These correspond with the four living creatures seen in the vision of Ezekiel, supporting the throne of Jehovah, going and returning like a flash of lightning.

It is supposed by some, that these four beasts cannot represent angelic beings, because they join with the twenty-four elders in the ascription of praise. "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." But, independently of these four living creatures being seen in Ezekiel's vision, where they evidently represent angelic beings, there is no great impropriety in supposing angelic beings joining in the song of the redeemed in heaven. For aught we know, the blessings of redemption may have extended even to them. St. Paul tells us, that "*unto principalities and powers in heavenly places* is to be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God;" that, "through the blood of his cross, he hath reconciled *all things* unto himself, whether they be *things in heaven* or things on earth;" and that "at the name of Jesus *every knee* shall bow, of *things in heaven*, and things in earth, and things under the earth." There is no reason why we should not interpret these four beasts as corresponding with the vision of Ezekiel, and praising God for the blessings of redemption.

St. John sees "*in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book written within and on the back side, and sealed with seven seals.*"

This vision still seems to correspond with the vision of Ezekiel, ii. After Ezekiel had seen the vision of the Most High, agreeing in many respects with the vision of God seen by St. John, "an hand was sent unto him, and lo! a roll of a book was therein;" "and it was written within and without, and there was written therein lamentation, and mourning, and woe." So, in the vision before us, "the throne" is disclosed, and "he that sat on it;" and in the right hand of him that sat on the throne is a book, written like Ezekiel's book, "within and without," "within and on the back side," and "sealed with seven seals."

The form of the book we may suppose to have been that of the ancient manuscript, "the roll of a book" seen by Ezekiel, —not sealed with all the seals on the outside, for then no part of the book could be read until all the seals were broken; but so sealed, that when one seal was broken, the MSS.

could be unrolled, till they came to the second seal, and so on to the end.

And here let me observe that the idea of breaking the seals intimates that the prophecy contained in the book was about to be fulfilled immediately.¹

The prophet Daniel is commanded to *seal up* his prophecy, because a long period of time was to elapse between the prophecy and its fulfilment.

“Shut up the words, and *seal* the book unto the time of the end.” “The words are closed, and *sealed* unto the time of the end;” “the time of the end” meaning, as I have shown in Lecture X., the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the close of the Jewish dispensation.

On the other hand, St. John is directed to leave his prophecy *unsealed*. “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.” The events disclosed in the book are about to take place *immediately*; it is a revelation of things “which must shortly come to pass.”

It is then evident that the breaking of the seals of the book would, upon the principles of scriptural interpretation, signify the disclosure of events about to receive an *immediate accomplishment*.

The vision next discloses “a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to loose the book, and to open the seals thereof; and no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.”

It was the book, which, in his human nature, the Son himself was unable to unfold—the book containing the development of those “times and seasons” which “the Father had put in his own power”—the book of which he said, “of that day, and of that hour, knoweth no man; neither the angels of God in heaven, *nor the Son*, but the Father;” or, as St. Matthew expresses it, “but my Father *only*.”²

¹ “And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee, and he saith I cannot; for it is sealed.”—Isaiah, xxix. 11.

² This shows that there was in our Lord a capability of accessive knowledge even after his ascension. Hence, “the Revelation” is said to be “the Revelation of Jesus Christ *which God gave unto him*.”

There seems, then, a marked propriety why that knowledge, which was withheld from the Son in his human nature, should now be given to him as the reward of his sufferings and death.

Accordingly we find that it is so given: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; *for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*"

The Evangelist is overwhelmed with grief because the book cannot be opened, or the seals loosed.

"And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon; and one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

No one can doubt to whom the epithet—"the lion of the tribe of Judah" refers. In the benediction of the patriarch Jacob, Judah is compared to a lion: "Judah is a lion's whelp; he stooped, he couched down as a lion, and as an old lion, who shall rouse him up." And, "it is evident," says St. Paul, "that our Lord sprang out of Judah."

He is also called "*the root of David.*" "I am the root and the offspring of David"—David's son and David's Lord—"the rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the branch growing out of his roots;" and David's Lord, of whom David says in spirit, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool."

But lest we should have any doubt to whom the epithets "the lion of the tribe of Judah" and "the root of David" belong, the Saviour is next described by that title which belongs to him alone of all the intelligent universe.

"I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a LAMB as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

I must not pass by the name by which He is described—"a Lamb." In the Apocalypse Christ is designated by this name some twenty-five times. This is a valuable confirmation of the authorship of this book. St. John is the only Evangelist who calls our Lord by this name. In his Gospel alone

we read, that John the Baptist, "looking upon Jesus as he walked," exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

The Saviour appears, moreover, as "*a Lamb that had been slain.*" The marks of his holy passion are discernible in the midst of his exaltation and glory. The print of the nails upon his hands and feet, and the gaping chasm rent by the spear, and the marks of the crown of suffering upon his brow, sparkle still more gloriously than the many crowns of divine glory which rest upon his head. His previous ignominy is the cause of his present exaltation. It is because he is "the Lamb slain," that he prevails to open the book.

"He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God hath highly exalted him." He was "made lower than the angels for the suffering of death," that he "might be crowned with glory and honour."

Observe, also, the glorious position occupied by the Redeemer of the universe. He is said to be "in the midst of the throne:" "and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

He is in the "midst of the throne," sharing divine honours and divine adoration. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father upon his throne."

"No man in heaven, or in earth, or under the earth"—a Hebrew expression for no created being—is able to "open the book or to look thereon."

He, by virtue of his eternal Sonship, and in virtue of that work of redeeming love which has caused "all power to be given to him in heaven and in earth," "came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

And then follows that magnificent burst of praise and adoration recorded in the concluding verses of this chapter. It commences with the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. It is taken up by the angelic hosts round about the throne, and is re-echoed by the whole created universe of God.

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wert slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth.

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ;

“Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

“And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”¹

Such is the glorious opening and introduction to the Apocalyptic symbols which follow. It looks more like a drama than a description—a scene to be acted and performed, rather than to be read or written. But under this magnificent imagery the meaning is very plain.

Things which are to take place “hereafter,” *μετὰ ταῦτα*, are to be unfolded to the seer. He is caught up to heaven in the spirit, whether bodily or mentally is of no consequence. He beholds the throne of the Deity surrounded by hosts of adoring intelligences. In the hand of Omnipotence is a book sealed. No creature in the universe of God can open it, or look thereon. St. John laments that no one can unfold its meaning. When, lo, an Interpreter is found ; a prophet, priest, and king appears. The Lamb slain takes the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, and prepares to break the seals.

And then from heaven and earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, peals forth the triumphant burst of acclamation—[in the highly poetical language of one² from whose interpretation I am compelled to differ most materially, but whose eloquent and gifted style no man of heart and feeling can dispute]

¹ Rev. v. 9—14.

² Dr. Cumming's “Apocalyptic Sketches.” Lecture iii.

—“its theme atoning blood, its key-note redeeming grace, its harmony the sustained and blended voices of adoring spirits; and the choir that sang it, the redeemed tenantry of earth and heaven, the angels of the sky, the inmates of the ocean. Thus it is now, and thus it will be for ever. The songs of psalmists praise him; the records of evangelists praise him; the glorious company of the apostles praise him; the goodly fellowship of the prophets praise him; the noble army of martyrs praise him; the past, the present, and the future praise him. All things bear the impress of his love, the evidence of his wisdom, the inspiration of his power.”

Yes. The Lamb slain is the theme which fills every heart, and which resounds on every tongue, throughout the intelligent creation of God. Hark to the jubilee of its triumphant notes, as it is echoed from angel to angel, from star to star, from system to system, from world to world, from mountain to mountain, from land to land, and from man to man. Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, swell the strain, till the echoes of the universe reverberate with the cadences of the everlasting song—

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.”

LECTURE III.

OPENING OF THE FIRST FOUR SEALS.

Rev. vi. 1—8.

1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow: and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4. And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

WE have hitherto done little more than speak of the preparations for the scene which is to follow. We have as yet only touched upon the prologue of this grand spiritual drama. That it is a grand spiritual drama, in which the actors are — the angels; the hero of the subject — Christ; the heroine — “the bride the Lamb’s wife; the consummation—the destruction of all enemies, and the marriage of the Lamb;—is what few would like to deny. It is impossible to read the book without being struck by the grandeur and sublimity of its disclosures. I believe no mind, but one enlightened from on high, could have entertained the majestic representation of the Deity unfolded in

chapter v.—no tongue, but that of an inspired man, could have compassed that sublime, unearthly song with which that chapter closes ; and that no heart, but one deeply impressed by God's Holy Spirit, could have imagined its glorious conceptions. I want no scholastic proof of the inspiration of the Apocalypse ; on its front it bears the impress of Divine authorship. I need no other evidence of the book being written under the direction of God's Holy Spirit, beyond that which the book itself affords.

We now come to the real difficulty of the Apocalypse. The seals of the mysterious book are opened by the Lamb. Had we been Christians of those days, we should have had no difficulty in comprehending these symbols. The distance of time, and age, and country, and situation, and habits of thought and expression, give them their real unintelligibility.

I shall, as I have already premised, seek for their explanation at the time when the Apocalypse must have been written. The plan which I shall adopt will be to give first the opinions of Dr. Cumming¹, as fairly as the mere statement of his views will allow, and then to subjoin my own.

I need not say we move on different lines, — that whilst he contends for the Domitianic date of the Apocalypse, we shall as earnestly combat for the Neronic date,—that whilst he affirms the Apocalypse is a prophetic history of the world and of the Church down to the end of time, we shall endeavour to maintain that it was a revelation of things “which must shortly come to pass,” and which received an immediate accomplishment. The principles for which we contend are as antagonistic as light and darkness ; not so, I trust, however, the feelings with which these differences are viewed : in conducting this inquiry, I desire to remember that God's holy word is the subject concerning which this diversity of opinion exists, and I pray that the heat of discussion may never lead to the substitution of invective instead of proof, or of acrimonious and hasty censure in the place of argument.

¹ Dr. Cumming does not profess originality. In page 1. of his *Apocalyptic Sketches* he says : “ I candidly tell you that I shall beg and borrow from the book of Mr. Elliott all I can ; ” his book is only a condensation of Mr. Elliott's views, wrapped up in that pleasing dress which no one can render more delightful than Dr. Cumming.

As I have said, then, I shall first state the views of Dr. Cumming, after which I shall subjoin my own, and leave the decision to those who may examine them.

FIRST SEAL.

Chap. vi. 1-2.—“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse : and he that sat on him had a bow : and a crown was given unto him ; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”

I give Mr. Elliott's explanation condensed by Dr. Cumming. “The colour of the first horse, white, indicates a state of prosperity, victory, and expansion, as the characteristic of the Roman empire during the period comprehended during this seal. Now was there any period, beginning at the date of this vision, signalled by such marked prosperity? There was : during the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, a period commencing A. D. 97, and closing A. D. 180, the Roman empire experienced a condition of almost unclouded national prosperity.” This is further illustrated by Trajan's victories and column.

“The crown upon the rider's head indicates that imperial agency was the source of this state of happiness ; and that we are right in fixing the æra in the first and second centuries, is made still more clear by reference to the Greek word here translated crown, ‘στέφανός’ wreath or laurel crown. The *διάδημα* was not worn till centuries afterwards.”

“In the rider's hand was a bow,—a symbol which long perplexed apocalyptic commentators. Crete was the chief ancient place that was celebrated for the manufacture of bows : so much so, that Cretan bows were as popular at Rome as Sheffield cutlery or Staffordshire earthenwares are throughout Europe. One proof of the meaning of the bow employed as a symbol is found on a Greek epigram on a female, which assigns to her a magpie to denote her loquacity, a cup, her drunkenness, and a bow, to show that she was a Cretan by birth.”

“Nerva was the first emperor of Cretan family and origin, and his immediate successors were Cretan also.”

The first seal is made to extend over a period of eighty-three years, from A. D. 97 to A. D. 180.

I point out a few difficulties in this interpretation.

When it is said that the seal extends from A. D. 97 to A. D. 180, you will perceive there is no proof of such a statement whatever, beyond the supposed prosperity of the Roman empire; for any thing said in the Apocalypse, the seal might have extended 1000 years as well as eighty-three, or six months as well as 1000 years. All the rest is mere assumption, and entirely destitute of argument. I am not so sure that all was prosperity with the Roman empire during these reigns; for in the reign of Adrian the northern barbarians began to devastate the frontier provinces of the empire,—so much so, that Adrian had thoughts of contracting the limits of the empire, by giving up its least defensible provinces.

And how could the successors of Nerva be called *Cretan*? Trajan was a Spaniard; Adrian was the nephew of Trajan, and the family of Titus Antoninus came from Gaul. There must be something faulty in the positive statement, “Nerva was the first emperor of Cretan family and origin, and his immediate successors were Cretan also.”

The absurdity of the bow in the hand denoting that the emperors were of Cretan origin is too preposterous to need comment.

I proceed to give a somewhat different interpretation. I must premise here that the first four seals having each the emblem of a horse and horseman, being each introduced by one of the four living creatures who support the throne of God, and being each prefaced with the emphatic words, “come and see,” seem to demand a similar interpretation, *i. e.* if the first seal be applicable to any one individual or power, the other seals set forth by similar emblems must correspond.

That all four seals refer to scenes of invasion, blood, and warfare, is evident from the contents of each:—

To the first horseman is given a “crown,” a “victor’s crown,” “*στεφανός*,”—he is to go forth conquering and to conquer.¹

¹ *Στεφανός*, “a laurel crown.” Mr. Elliott’s argument respecting the laurel crown applies with equal force to the crown given to Vespasian and Titus.

To the second, "a sword,"—he is to take "peace from the earth."

To the third, "a pair of balances," indicative of the pressure of terrible famine following in the footsteps of war.

In the fourth, the horseman is Death on a pale horse, and hell (ᾠδης) follows him; "and power is given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

To whatever period these first four seals refer, they refer to a time connected with conquest, battle, famine, pestilence,—to a period not separated by long intervals of time, for the first horseman goes out "conquering and to conquer,"¹ i. e. to commence a series of victories which should end in triumph.

Let us proceed to analyse the emblems of this first seal. "*I saw, and behold a white horse.*"

The horse is emblematical of the Roman power. Such emblems are common in Scripture. The emblem of Judah is a lion, of Persia, a ram, of Grecia, a he-goat. The national emblem of Rome was a horse. The Roman nation is called "Gens Mavortia," the people sacred to Mars, and a horse was yearly offered to Mars in the Capitol. Mr. Elliott gives a medal, with a figure of a horse and the word Roma underneath.

The colour of the horse,—*white*,—denoted conquest and victory. Kings and conquerors were drawn by *white horses*. Domitian rode a white horse at his father Vespasian's triumph. Josephus says, "he rode on a horse that was worthy of admiration."²

"*He that sat on him had a bow.*" The bow³ was a com-

¹ "*ἵνα νικήσῃ.*" A Hellenistic idiom—"that he should gain victory after victory."

² Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

³ Mr. Layard thus describes Sennacherib before Lachish, as depicted in the Nineveh marbles: "The throne of the king stood upon an elevated platform; in his right hand he raised two arrows, *and his left rested upon a bow*; over his head was written the inscription, 'Sennacherib, the great king, the king of Assyria, sitting in judgment on the city of Lachish, I give permission for its slaughter.'" In another passage, Mr. Layard connects the emblem of the bow in the king's hand with victory and triumph: "*Behind them is the king, carrying in one hand his bow and in the other two arrows*, the position in which he is so frequently represented in Assyrian monuments, and probably denoting triumph over his enemies."—Layard, vol. i. p. 334. Thus

mon emblem of a victorious warrior — particularly of a warrior devoting a city to destruction.

“*A crown was given unto him*” — his success would be rewarded with regal dignity.

“*And he went forth conquering and to conquer*” — to persevere in his victories till he should overcome all opposition.

Did such a conqueror proceed from the Roman power at that time? Josephus tells us, “that when Nero was deliberating to whom he should commit the affairs of the East, and who might be best able to punish the Jews for their rebellion, he found no one but Vespasian equal to the task — he was a man that had long ago *pacified the West*, when it had been put into disorder by the Germans; he had also *recovered to them Britain by his arms*, which had been little known before.”¹

The crown given to him² is explained by the extraordinary coincidence that whilst Vespasian, a Roman general, was fighting in Judæa, the Emperor Nero committed suicide at Rome, and Vespasian was declared emperor by the legions; and when he refused the empire, “the commanders insisted the more earnestly upon his acceptance, and the soldiers came to him with drawn swords in their hands, and threatened to kill him, unless he would live according to his dignity, till he at length yielded to their solicitations, and *allowed them to salute him Emperor*.”³

“Perhaps also there was some interposition of Providence which was paving the way for Vespasian’s being himself *Emperor afterwards*.”⁴

“So Vespasian’s good fortune succeeded to his wishes every-

Jacob blesses Joseph, (Gen. xlviii. 22.), “I have given thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword, and with my bow.” Should it be objected that the vision depicts a European and not an Eastern king, it must be remembered that the symbols are purely of Eastern origin.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 1.

² If it should be objected that it was not Vespasian but Titus who took Jerusalem, it may be answered, that the crown was given to Titus as well as to Vespasian; Titus was saluted emperor after the taking of the temple, and both Vespasian and Titus wore the imperial crown. Josephus admirably forestalls this objection, where he says: “That government which had been newly conferred upon them (Vespasian and Titus) by God.” — Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 1.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 10.

⁴ Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 1.

where ; upon which he considered that he had not arrived at the government without Divine Providence, but that *a righteous kind of fate had brought the empire under his power* ; for as he called to mind the other signals, so did he remember what Josephus said to him when he ventured to foretel his coming to the kingdom while Nero was alive.”¹

His going forth “*conquering and to conquer*,” is abundantly proved by Josephus, who has shown in his Jewish War, that victory everywhere followed the irresistible legions of Rome. The war from the commencement to the end was a succession of victories, closed at last by the destruction of Jerusalem. Those victories are commemorated to this day in the triumphal arch of Titus at Rome, and by the medal struck in honour of those conquests, representing a female figure weeping under a palm tree, with the motto, “*Judæa devicta*,” — Judæa conquered.

Observe then, at that time a mighty conqueror went forth from Rome on his mission of victory ; the bow in his hand was emblematical of previous success, and also of his particular mission as the destroyer of a city — “a crown was given unto him,” for he was saluted Emperor — “and he went forth” “conquering and to conquer,” till Judæa lay prostrate at his feet.

And this took place, not in the eighty-three years of the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines ; but in the three and a half years of the Jewish war.

SECOND SEAL.

“And when he had opened the Second Seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see, and there went out another horse that was red, and power was given him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and there was given unto him a great sword.”

Dr. Cumming says : — “In this seal also the Roman Empire, the horse, is the subject of description. Red is the symbol of bloodshed. The sword when presented to any one within a circuit of 100 miles of Rome, at the era referred to in this seal,

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 10.

was equivalent to his appointment or investiture to be Prætorian Prefect. This therefore would indicate that the agency employed under this seal was Prætorian.

“ ‘Killing one another,’ is the language of civil war. The peace taken from the earth has in the original the definite article¹, and this shows that the commission issued to the rider was to take away the peace that was created or prevailed during the First Seal. Is there anything recorded in history which exhausts and illustrates these symbols? We appeal to Gibbon — he shows that the bright and happy era which we have just referred to was succeeded by intestine and incessant civil wars. Dion Cassius calls it ‘a transition from a golden to an iron age.’ ”

“The Prætorian guards, under their chief, murdered nine Roman emperors in succession, and during a period of sixty years, that is, from the close of the First Seal, A.D. 180, to the close of the Second Seal, A.D. 240, they exercised exterminating cruelties, and created a Roman reign of terror. Gibbon writes:—‘Their licentious fury was the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman Empire.’ ”

I shall explain this seal of civil war, but with a great variety of date. I have observed that the first four seals have one characteristic in common; viz., the symbol of a horse and horseman, which is the basis of each. We must look, then, for the interpretation in some events connected with the Roman conquest of Judæa.

The colour of the horse, *red*, is the colour of blood.

The sword in the hand of the horseman denotes slaughter, and the peculiar feature of this slaughter is, that it is to be domestic slaughter, civil strife,—that they should “kill one another.”

Now let us ask was this the case during the Roman invasion of Judæa? was peace taken from the land of Judæa? and did the inhabitants of the land kill one another?

¹ If the force of the definite article be so great with regard to the previously existing peace, what must the force of the same definite article with regard to “the earth,” “ἐκ τῆς γῆς,” the land of Judæa? Compare “πᾶσαι αἱ φύλαι τῆς γῆς,” omnes tribus terræ Israeliticæ, Rev. i. 7.; “βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς,” principes Palæstinæ, Rev. vi. 15.; “Ἔσται γὰρ ἀνάγκη μεγάλη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ὄργη ἐν τῷ λαῷ τοῦτο,” Luke xxi. 23., where by the correlative phrase ὁ λαὸς τοῦτος, the ἡ γῆ is defined to be the land of Judæa.

Of all plain and well-known historical facts, this is the plainest ; any one who has read the history of those miserable times knows that the principal feature in that history was the intestine factions and civil struggles which, more than foreign foes, annihilated the Jewish people.

I might quote volumes upon this subject. Josephus tells us :—“There were three treacherous factions in the city, the one parted from the other. Eleazar and his party came against John ; those that were with John went out with zeal against Simon.”¹ In their mad fury they destroyed all the corn laid up for the siege, and destroyed the “nerves of their own power.”²

“Accordingly it came to pass that almost all the corn was burnt, which would have been sufficient for a siege of many years. So they were taken by the means of the famine, which it was impossible they should have been, unless they had thus prepared the way first by this procedure.”

“And now, as the city was engaged in a war on all sides from these treacherous crowds of wicked men, the people of the city, between them, were like a great body torn in pieces ; the aged men and the women were in such distress by their internal calamities, that they wished for the Romans, and earnestly hoped for an external war, in order to their delivery from their domestic miseries.” “God,” said Vespasian to his officers, “acts as a general of the Romans better than he could do, and is giving the Jews up to them without any pains of their own ; that therefore it is their best way, *while their enemies are destroying each other with their own hands* to sit still as spectators, rather than to fight with men that love murdering, and are mad one against another.”³

We need not put this horseman’s sword into the hands of

¹ “Tres Duces, totidem exercitus : extrema et latissima mœnium, Simon, mediam urbem, Johannes, quem et Burgioram vocabant, Templum, Eleazarus, loco pollebat. Sed prælia, dolus, incendia inter ipsos, et magna vis frumenti ambusta.”—Tacit. Hist. v. 12.

² Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 1. — “The corn burnt.” Observe, the seal denoting famine follows the seal emblematical of civil war. Had they not burnt their magazines of corn, and thus destroyed “the nerves of their own power,” in the fury of their civil strife, this famine could not have taken place.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 6.

the Prætorian prefects ; we need not refer these intestine troubles to sixty years of Roman history. There and then — at the time — the coming of the Romans led to intestine troubles among the Jews ; and this civil slaughter depopulated Judæa more than the sword of foreign invasion. “ Oh, most wretched city,” said Josephus, “ what misery so great as this didst thou suffer from the Romans, when they came to purify thee from thine intestine hatred ; for thou couldst be no longer a place fit for God, after thou hadst been a sepulchre for the bodies of thine own people, and hadst made the holy house itself a burying-place in this civil war of thine.”

THIRD SEAL.

“ And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see ; and I beheld, and lo a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand ; and I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see that thou hurt not the oil and wine.”¹

This is referred by Elliott and Cumming to the oppressiveness of the provincial governors during the reign of Caracalla, which Gibbon states to be one of the principal causes of the decline of the Roman Empire. It is needless to observe, that this oppressiveness is no more true of the Roman provincial governors during the reign of Caracalla than during any other reign ; most of them, amongst whom I may instance Festus, Albinus, and Florus, being guilty of terrible exactions.²

¹ Wheat, barley, oil, and wine, the especial productions of Palestine ; “ A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, a land of oil olive, and honey.”—Deut. viii. 8.

² Character of Albinus and Florus.—“ Albinus, who succeeded Festus, did not execute his office as the other had done, nor was there any sort of wickedness that could be named but he had a hand in it. Accordingly, he did not only in his political capacity steal and plunder every one's substance, nor did he only burden the whole nation with taxes, but he permitted the relations of such as were in prison for robbery, to redeem them for money ; and nobody remained in the prisons as a malefactor, but he who gave him nothing.”—Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 14.

“ But although such was the character of Albinus, yet did Gessius Florus,

I hope to arrive at a more satisfactory explanation. The colour of the horse, *black*, is indicative of mourning and distress.¹ The rider holding in his hands *a pair of balances*, for the purpose of measuring and weighing food, shows that this distress is occasioned by want of the necessities of life. This is confirmed by the voice saying, “a measure² of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see that thou hurt not the oil and wine.”

Did events corresponding to this seal take place during the Roman invasion of Judæa? Is it known that famine prevailed to a great extent? Were the prices of food raised considerably higher; and was there any occasion which justified the emblems conveyed under this seal?

This is no matter of conjecture. The account is given us by one, who, whilst he was a captive in the hands of the Roman armies, outside the walls of Jerusalem, had his wife and children within the walls, a prey to the horrible famine which he describes³:—“Many there were,” he says, “who sold what they had for one measure: it was of *wheat* if they were

who succeeded him, demonstrate him to have been a most excellent person upon the comparison; for the former did the greatest part of his rogueries in private, but Gessius did his unjust actions to the harm of the nation, and as though he had been sent as an executioner to punish condemned malefactors, he omitted no sort of rapine or of vexation; he thought it but a petty offence to get money out of single persons, so he spoiled whole cities, and ruined entire bodies of men at once.”—Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 14.

¹ “Wives and families that are in *black*, mourning for their slaughtered relations.”—Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 4.

² *Χοῖνιξ*, “a measure.”—There is so much difference of opinion with regard to the meaning of the word translated a measure, that we cannot form an accurate judgment as to what extent the famine prevailed.

³ “As for myself, I have composed a true history of that war, having been concerned in its transactions; for I acted as general with those among us who are called Galileæans, as long as it was possible for us to make any opposition; and when I was taken captive by the Romans, Vespasian and Titus ordered me to be kept under a guard, but commanded that I should attend to them continually. At first I was in bonds; afterwards I was set at liberty, and was sent to accompany Titus when he came to the siege of Jerusalem, during which time nothing was done which escaped my knowledge. What happened in the Roman camp I saw, and wrote down carefully; what information the deserters brought out of the city I was the only man who could understand it.”—Jos. Contra Apion, lib. 1. c. 9.

“Judæus Josephus antiquitatum Judaicarum vernaculus vindex.”—Tertullian, Apol. 19.

of the richer sort, but of *barley* if they were poorer. When these had so done, they shut themselves up in the inmost rooms of the houses, and ate the corn they had gotten; some did it without grinding it, by reason of the extremity of the want they were in; and others snatched the bread out of the fire half baked, and ate it very heartily.”¹

He further adds:—“That a bushel of wheat was sold for a talent (375*l.*); and that when it was not possible to gather herbs by reason of the city being all walled about, some persons were driven to that terrible distress as to search the common sewers and old dunghills of cattle, and to eat the dung which they got there; and what they of old could not so much as endure to see, they now used as food.”²

This appears to me to be a more likely interpretation than that which refers this seal to the cupidity of the Roman governors during the reign of Caracalla. Were *they* the only avaricious Roman governors, and were they *all* avaricious? and did their avarice only commence in the year 240 and extend over a period of eight years? We must suppose that, in the seal, there is some mystic intelligence which ordinary minds cannot fathom, to signify that it begins with the year 240, and ends with the year 248. I confess, I cannot find it, and that, if it is to be interpreted of the avarice of the Roman governors, it might as well extend over the whole period of Roman usurpation and tyranny, as over a particular period of eight years.

FOURTH SEAL.

The Fourth Seal is ushered in under circumstances of peculiar majesty and terror. “And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see; and I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him, and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”

“This seal,” says Dr. Cumming, “almost explains itself. It represents Death riding rough-shod over the length and

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10.

² Ibid. v. cap. 13.

breadth of the empire, and Hades, or the grave, following at his heels to receive the victims as they fell. It was during this seal, from A.D. 248 to A.D. 268, that there occurred the most terrible contemporaneous combination of sword, famine, and pestilence, that ever visited a guilty population."

Gibbon describes it thus :—"Every province was invaded by barbarous military tyrants ; there was a general famine, a dreadful plague, so that 4,500 persons died each day at Rome." And a heathen writer states, "The wild beasts invaded the cities as the natural consequence of the decay of man."

It is possible that precise period of Roman history might have been visited with sword, and famine, and pestilence ; but I am prepared to show that these punishments of God *fell upon a particular land, and at a particular time* : not commencing with the year 248, and ending 268, but immediately after the Apocalypse was written, and confined within the period of the Jewish war.

Observe the colour of the horse—pale, cadaverous, livid—the colour suiting the rider : for his name is Death. Hell or the grave follows him ; and power is given him to "destroy with sword, and hunger, and with death (the same word is often used to signify pestilence), and with beasts of the earth."

The description is highly allegorical ; yet at the same time magnificently stern and grand. It is

"The Giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse."

Poets and painters have fastened on the symbol, and gathered from it sublime, though erroneous, imagery.

However, nothing can be plainer than the meaning which lies hid under this symbol. Death, famine, and pestilence follow in the steps of war ; nothing is more natural than that famine should tread on the steps of war, or that pestilence should follow famine.

The question is—did such pestilence—such famine—such wholesale slaughter and destruction, happen at this time ? Did Death on a pale horse ride rough-shod over his victims, and did hell and the grave follow him ?

Josephus says that when "Titus, in going his rounds along the valleys in front of Jerusalem, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefaction running from them, he gave a groan,

and spreading out his hands to heaven, called God to witness, that this was not his doing.”¹

In another passage—“The multitude of carcasses that lay in heaps one upon another was a horrible sight, and produced a pestilential stench.”²

In another statement—“The multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either man or God brought upon the world.”³

I might quote innumerable passages besides these, but these are sufficient. If Death on the pale horse ever had a revel, and feasted over human victims, his greatest banquet was at the time of Jerusalem’s downfall.

According to our Lord’s words (Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.) “*Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.*”

Such I conceive is the reasonable and satisfactory interpretation of the first four seals. They have each the common basis of a horse and his rider; they each refer to scenes of conquest, war, and bloodshed; they each have a *continuous* signification, for the horseman goes forth “conquering and to conquer;” they each are introduced by one of the four living creatures, and each are prefaced with the words demanding attention, “Come and see.” It is natural to look for a continuous interpretation, and we find one, not by ranging over the history of 200 years, not by turning over the pages of Gibbon to find some event likely to suit the seal, but in the defined and specific period of the Jewish war.

First comes the foreign invader, on his white horse, armed with his bow, the emblem of previous victories, and going forth “conquering and to conquer.”

Then civil war following in the footsteps of foreign invasion.

Then famine, with its balances and short measures.

Then pestilence bringing up the rear of this terrible array.

All is easy, simple, natural, and all finds an exact and literal fulfilment in the period which we have assigned.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 12.

² Ib. lib. vi. cap. 1.

³ Ib. lib. vi. cap. 9.

It will, I think, be deemed confirmatory of this exposition now given of the first four seals, to find in a book of an almost Apostolical character, generally thought to have been written by the Hermas mentioned by St. Paul (Rom. xvi. 14.), in such high estimation with the early Christians that it was called "the Scripture," and "publicly read in the churches," that a beast (the common emblem of the Roman power) is represented rising "from the sea as a whale," (compare Rev. xiii. 1. ; Dan. vii. 3.) "*having upon its head four colours.*"

"The beast had upon its head four colours, *black*, then *red* and blood-colour; after that *pale*; last of all, *white*. . . . This beast came on so fiercely as if it could destroy the city at a blow . . . this beast is the emblem of the wrath which is about to come."¹

It will be observed there is a marked coincidence between the colours of the four horses mentioned in the Apocalypse and the colours upon the head of the beast mentioned by Hermas; and when to this it is added, that the beast, both in the Apocalypse and the Book of Hermas "*rises from the sea*," that the object of his terrible approach is to "*destroy the city*," and that the beast is defined to be "*the emblem of the wrath which is about to come*," (an explanation allowed by the best commentators to refer to the distress about to come upon Judæa and Jerusalem), there will be little doubt but that the Apocalypse and the Vision of Hermas both prefigure the same events, and that the application of these symbols to the distress caused by the Roman invasion of Judæa is correct. This gives great weight to the exposition which refers the first four seals to the calamities about to come upon the Jewish people in consequence of the invasion of the Romans. It shows that these views harmonise with the original interpretations of the symbols of the Apocalypse, and that the theories of our conjectural age are a modern myth and a hypothetical novelty. It shows that Cretan bows were as little likely to be prefigured in those symbols as Staffordshire earthenware, and that Prætorian pre-

¹ "Habebat autem bestia illa super caput colores quatuor, nigrum, deinde rubrum et sanguinolentum, inde aureum (χλωρός, ὤχρος, λευκοῦ ξανθῶ μεμυγμένου) deinde album . . . sic autem veniebat bestia illa ut posset in ietu civitatem delere . . . bestia hæc figura est pressuræ superventuræ" τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς.—Hermæ Pastor, lib. i. visio 4.

fects occupy about as legitimate a place in the Apocalypse as the rapacious provincial governors of the reign of Caracalla whose rapacity lasted neither more nor less than eight years. It shows that neither Greek epigrams on females, nor the loquacity of magpies, serve to throw much light upon its mysteries, and that the fable of the Cretan dynasty is worthy of the Cretan character as given by St. Paul.

In a word, it shows that the principles* on which such interpretation is conducted are false and mischievous, and productive not only of much negative folly, but of much positive harm ; and it teaches us, that if we would obtain a solution of the symbols of the Apocalypse, we must be content to look for it at a period when symbolic teaching was by no means uncommon, that men of an Apostolic age were more likely to have understood Apostolic mysteries than would-be prophets of later times, and that the explanation given by them of these symbols is probably more in unison with truth, than the interpretation offered by modern theorists ; in fact, that the reasonable exegesis of contemporaneous authority is more worthy of credit than the guess-work of after ages, and the "scriptural" definition of Apocalyptic symbols, as Irenæus, Origen, Jerome, and Eusebius, would have called the exposition of Hermas Pastor, more fit to be trusted than the crude hypothesis of the nineteenth century.

Such, then, the nature of these outpourings of the wrath of God upon a race of evil-doers. Such the mighty conqueror, and such the woes that followed in his train ; and to crown the whole, these distinct and specific miseries, so graphically portrayed in the first four seals, are made the subject of previous imprecation. In the period immediately preceding the coming desolation, innocent blood ascends reeking up to heaven, and cries for vengeance, shaped to the very form and

¹ "And, first, as to the *principles* adopted. These, as far as I have been able to ascertain them, are those only of ingenious conjecture, supported in detail by what may be termed the *doctrine of resemblances* ; for example, the meaning of a prediction of Scripture is, in the first place, guessed at ; in the second, the event so supposed to be had in view is made to quadrate with it to a certain extent, just in proportion to the amount of ingenuity exerted ; the *resemblance* so obtained is, as it is then thought, too near to have been undesigned, and the conclusion is, that the needful has been satisfactorily ascertained."—Professor Lee on Prophecy, Preface, 1849.

letter of these Apocalyptical predictions. In the words of that unconscious witness, from whose unwilling lips we wring the sublimest confirmation of the truth of our holy religion, these four terrible visitants, war, famine, civil discord and pestilence, were invoked at that time upon that guilty nation, and that awful invocation was confirmed by Almighty God. "Now, whilst they (the zealots) were slaying him (Niger of Peræa), he made this imprecation upon them, that they might undergo both *famine and pestilence in this war*; and besides all that, they might come to *the mutual slaughter one of another*, ALL WHICH IMPRECATIONS GOD CONFIRMED AGAINST THESE IMPIOUS MEN, and was what came most justly upon them when, not long afterward, they tasted of their own madness, in their mutual seditions one against another."¹

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 6.

LECTURE IV.

THE FIFTH SEAL. THE ÆRA OF MARTYRS.

REV. vi. 9, 10, 11.

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held :

10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?

11. And white robes were given unto every one of them ; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

OUR previous lecture embraced the subject of the first four seals. These were shown to be symbolical of invasion, civil discord, famine, and pestilence. With the opening of the First, a warrior goes forth, "conquering and to conquer." He is described by symbols which make it evident that Rome is the source of his mission, and that his triumphs would be successive until they closed in victory. And the overruling providence of God so accurately fits the fulfilment to the prediction, that Judæa is for the first time desolated by a Roman conqueror (for previous reductions of Judæa by the Romans did not terminate in its destruction), and these desolations are suffered to continue until, as a nation, the Jews became extinct.

With the opening of the Second, not only is the nature of the misery caused by this foreign invasion accurately defined, but the particular land is pointed out upon which this misery should come. "The peace is to be taken from the earth" (τῆς γῆς) —Judæa. The previously existing amity between the Romans and the Jewish people is to be broken up, and Judæa is to be filled with internal discord and civil slaughter.

With the opening of the Third, the scene of the coming desolation is still unmistakably defined. Not only is the price

to be paid for the "measure of wheat" and the "three measures of barley," said to be a "denarium,"—the Roman penny spoken of John, vi. 7. and elsewhere, at that time the current money of Judæa,—but the peculiar productions of that land, described as "wheat, and barley, and oil, and wine," are smitten by the famine. No language could more clearly determine the particular land upon which this scarcity was to come; whilst the distinct recognition of the current money of the land, makes it morally certain that Judæa alone must be intended.

With the opening of the Fourth, the particular land which death and hell are to cover with their victims is again specifically delineated. "Power was given to them over the fourth part of the earth," (τῆς γῆς)—Judæa—"to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth," (τῆς γῆς)—Judæa. I need not say how faithfully this symbol received its accomplishment; how at that particular time there was "great distress in the land," (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς)—Judæa—"and wrath upon this people,"—the Jews; or how the dead bodies "were cast out naked, *and seen to be the food of dogs and wild beasts.*"¹

Indeed, the first four seals present a combined and connected view of what would naturally happen under the circumstances. Nothing would be more likely than that foreign invasion should be followed by civil war, famine, and pestilence. We have ample testimony that such was the case at that time, and that the invasion of the Romans was the signal for the commencement of those heart-rending desolations which exterminated the ancient people of God,—an extermination which the lapse of 2,000 years has not obliterated, and which the historian of that age has forcibly described as "exceeding all the destructions that either man or God brought upon the world."

A new picture is presented to us under the Fifth Seal. The Roman horse and horsemen fade from our view,—war, strife, famine, and pestilence, recede. The actors in this seal are no more connected with conquest and battle,—and a new vision opens upon us,—a vision of plaintive martyrs and mourning saints.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5.

FIFTH SEAL.

“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held :

“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?

“And white robes were given unto every one of them ; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.”

I ask you to observe the grandeur and majesty of this vision. Invasion, civil discord, famine, and pestilence, are about to fall upon the enemies of the Church,—when to heighten and enhance the terribleness of this spiritual drama, the temple of God is disclosed in heaven. Under the altar, *i. e.* at the foot of the altar, the place where the bodies of the victims would be laid, are seen the souls of the murdered martyrs.

That these souls do not represent invisible or immaterial spirits is evident from the circumstance that St. John sees them, and that “white robes are given unto them.” They are described as the souls of martyrs for their religion ; for they are “*slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.*” They are, moreover, represented as invoking the vengeance of God upon their murderers. “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?”

It is impossible to conceive a more majestic picture than this invocation, of his own “elect crying day and night unto him,” beseeching him to “finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness.” “And shall not God avenge his own elect ? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily ; nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth.”¹

¹ By comparing this passage with Luke, xxi. 22, 23, it will be found that the vengeance predicted was to be executed by our Lord's coming to the land of Judæa. “These be the days of vengeance, *ἡμέραι ἐκδικήσεως* . . . for there shall be great distress in the land, *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, and wrath upon this people.”

“And it was said unto them that they should rest yet a little season¹, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, which should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled;” and, as it were, to stay their impatient desire for vengeance upon their enemies, “white robes are given to them”—the same honour as that promised to the faithful martyrs at Sardis,—“they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” The white robes were particularly the insignia of the martyrs. So in Chapter vii., one of the elders asks St. John, “What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they;” and the answer is, “These are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

The whole figure is of a highly poetical character. The ghost of Patroclus imploring Achilles to avenge his death, or the spirits described by Ossian, shrieking on the clouds and demanding blood, sink into insignificance, as far as mere poetry is concerned, when compared with this magnificent symbol. It is true of the Bible generally, and especially of the Apocalypse, that as a poetical composition, independently of its saving truths, it has never been equalled by any writing in the world.

Mr. Elliot and Dr. Cumming refer this seal to the persecutions commencing with the reign of Diocletian until the intro-

I notice here an unfair translation of the original. It was impossible to avoid the force of the words *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* in Luke, xxi. 23., for they are qualified by the accompanying clause, “upon this people,” which can only mean the land and people of Judæa. By what rules of criticism are the words *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* translated “in the land,” Luke, xxi. 23., rendered “on the earth” in Luke, xviii. 3.? It is most evident that one idea was intended under both passages. The elect cry for vengeance, *ἐκδίκησιν*; that vengeance is promised soon, *ἐν τάχει*; the Son of Man cometh to execute that vengeance, and hardly findeth faith on the earth, *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, — Judæa. Luke, xviii. 8. So Luke, xxi. 24. The days of vengeance, *ἡμέραι ἐκδικήσεως*, arrive; there is great distress in the land, *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, — Judæa, — and wrath upon this people, and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”

There is no evading the conclusion that the same vengeance is spoken of in both texts, that it was to come upon “the land,” i. e. Judæa, and to be accomplished at the period of the coming of the Son of Man.

¹ *Ἐτι χρόνον μικρόν*, “a little season.” This is a confirmation of the date of the Apocalypse. God avenged the blood of his servants only on those that dwelt in the land of Judæa, and the period of that vengeance was the time of the destruction of Jerusalem — they had not to wait long.

duction of Christianity by Constantine, A. D. 300. I give Dr. Cumming's interpretation :—

“ This seal comprehends, as its language plainly enough proves, the æra beginning at the close of the third century, justly and universally called the *Æra of Martyrs*. The Christians were slaughtered in vast numbers,—their blood was poured out like that of victims at the foot of the altar,—and there, like Abel's, it sent its piercing cry into the heavens, saying, ‘ How long ! ’ The churches were overturned, the congregations scattered, their Bibles burnt, the holiest and best ‘ tortured, not accepting deliverance.’ To the cry of these martyrs in their agony a response was given from on high ; they received ‘ white robes,’ the evidence of acquittal and justification before God ; and they were told that they must rest until subsequent martyrs, the victims of anti-christian, that is, papal persecution, the complement of the noble army, should be numbered with them, that both might thus rejoice together.”

It is needless to observe, that if the sole reason of applying this seal to the Diocletian persecution is because of the martyrdoms which then took place, there are many other periods in the history of the Church to which it would equally refer. And how, it may be asked, was the Diocletian persecution avenged “ on them that dwell on the earth ”—Judæa ; for judgment against the betrayers and murderers of the martyrs of Jesus came on no other people but the Jews, and no other city but Jerusalem ? Or how could the sufferers under the Diocletian persecution be said to wait “ *a little season* ” for their fellow “ victims of anti-christian, that is, papal persecution ? Surely a period comprising a third part of the world's existence (for I presume the Austrian and Italian martyrs of our day are included in the “ complement of this noble army ”) cannot well be called “ *a little season*.”

Or, how again could these martyrs, who should *soon* be slain, and who stood in the contemporaneous relationship of “ fellow servants and brethren ” to those who were killed already, be made to suffer in a persecution which had not then an existence ?

I trust to be enabled to show that the Fifth Seal refers to the period when the book was written, and not to a period 250 years after. That there were martyrs *then* whose blood cried for vengeance, that their blood was terribly *avenged*, that this

vengeance took place *soon*, and that they had but to rest a "little season" before the vengeance came.

Our first point must be to show that the Christian Church suffered extraordinary persecution about this time, and that the vision seen by St. John "of souls under the altar slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held," was abundantly realised.

Let us consider, first, our Lord's predictions with reference to this subject. Luke xxi. 12.: "But, *before all these* (*i. e.* before the signs which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem), they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake;" "and ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; *and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.*" Matt. xxiv. 9.: "They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, *and shall kill you*; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

Such were the prophecies which predicted that our Lord's disciples just at this time (*i. e.* the time immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem), should meet with unwonted trials and persecutions; that the furnace should be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated; that whatever affliction they had previously endured should be light in comparison with that which they were about to suffer; that an "hour of temptation" was coming upon the earth, during which "many should be offended, and should betray one another, and hate one another;" and because "iniquity should abound, the love of many should wax cold."

Now did the Christian Church meet with unwonted persecution at this particular time?

Persecution had followed the Church from its earliest days; but that was rather the outburst of popular feeling than organised, systematic persecution. Stephen had been martyred in such an outbreak; and with a view of rendering himself popular with the Jewish people, "Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church, and he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword."¹

¹ Acts, xii. 1, 2.

But in the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, persecution sanctioned by imperial authority took a more definite shape, and regal mandates were stereotyped in acts of savage cruelty.

St. Paul says of the extraordinary trial of that period, "I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, (*ἡμᾶς, τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἐσχάτους*," us, the last apostles, — alluding possibly to the circumstance that preceding apostles had already "gone to the place due to them from the Lord") "as it were appointed unto death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, unto angels and unto men."¹

He records with much feeling his defence before Nero: "At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."²

St. Peter warns his converts of a season of unusual trial which was fast approaching: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."³

St. James: "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."⁴

Nothing is more certain from the testimony of the sacred books themselves, that the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem was one of cruel and savage persecution.

The next point is,—Is this confirmed by testimony independent of the Scriptures? Did the Christians thus suffer in the reign of Nero—in the period for which we contend.

Tacitus⁵, speaking of the fire at Rome wantonly kindled by Nero, says: "To do away with the foul disgrace of having set the city on fire, Nero laid the guilt, and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men, who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. . . . At

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 9.

² 2 Tim. iv. 16.

³ 1 Peter, iv. 12.

⁴ James, v. 11.

⁵ "Ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos, et quæsitissimis pœnis affecit, quos per flagitia invisos, Christianos appellabat. . . . Igitur primò correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, haud perinde in crimine incendii, quum odio humani generis convicti sunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, aut ferarum tergis connecti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque ubi defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis ureretur."—Tacitus, Ann. xv. 44.

first those only were seized who confessed their persuasion; and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended and condemned, not so much for their crime of setting the city on fire, as for their hatred of all mankind. Their sufferings at the place of execution were embittered by derision and insult. Some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; while others, smeared over with combustible matter, were used as torches to illuminate the night."

Suetonius, speaking of Nero's reign: "The Christians, a race of men of a new and impious superstition, were severely tortured." ¹

Juvenal ² says of the same reign, speaking of a creature of Nero's whose name was Tigellinus,—

"If you dare to speak of his enormities, you shall suffer as the Christians do. You shall suffer the same punishment with those who stand burning in their own flame and smoke; their heads held up by a stake fixed to their chins, till they make a long stream of blood, and melted sulphur on the ground."

Another ancient writer ³ turned their sufferings into ridicule, and mocked the heroic firmness with which these noble missionaries of Christ went to their death. I attempt a paraphrase:—

"Look into the arena. You will see a Christian; his name is Mucius. He is about to place his own limbs on the burning pyre. Do not be so dull as to consider him a hero or a martyr; it is nothing more than obstinacy; for when he is offered the choice of wearing his shirt steeped in pitch, or of sacrificing to the statue of the emperor, he says, I cannot do it; I prefer to die."

¹ "Afficti supplicis Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ."—In vitâ Neronis, 16.

² "Pone Tigellinum, tædâ lucebis in illâ,
Quâ stantes ardent, quâ fixo gutture fumant,
Et latum mediâ, sulcum deducis arena."—Sat. i. 155.

³ Martial: "In matutinâ nuper spectatus arenâ
Mucius, imposuit qui sua membra focis,
Si patiens, fortisque tibi, durusque videtur
Abderitanæ pectora plebis habes,
Nam quum dicatur tunicâ præsentemolestâ,
Ure manum, plus est dicere, non facio."—Lib. x. Ep. 25.

To this testimony I shall add that of the Christian histories themselves.

Eusebius¹ says : “ Nero, having the government firmly established under him, began to take up arms against that very religion which acknowledges the one Supreme God. He was the first of the emperors that displayed himself an enemy of piety towards the Deity. Thus Nero, publicly announcing himself as the chief enemy of God, was led on in his fury to slaughter the Apostles. Paul is therefore said to have been beheaded at Rome, and Peter to have been crucified under him.”

Tertullian :— “ Consult your edicts, there you will find that Nero was the first who savagely persecuted this sect, springing up every where, and especially at Rome, with the imperial sword. But we even glory in such a leader of our punishment, for whoever knows who he was, can understand that there could be nothing great and good but what was condemned by Nero.”²

I beg you to observe from this accumulation of evidence, that the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem was one of savage and fiery persecution to the Christian Church ; and that, although the Fifth Seal may be referred to any period of suffering when martyrs have cried from beneath the altar, it can refer to none with greater perspicuity than to Nero’s reign. Persecutions, indeed, arose under Domitian and Diocletian ; martyrs have been found in every age and dispensation of the Church ; but the point for which we contend is this,— we have named a certain date as the date of the writing of the Apocalypse—we find, from the internal evidence of the book, that it was written when the martyrs’ blood was poured out like water ; and we want proof to show that at that period such martyrdoms took place.

That evidence I consider we have in large abundance. Nothing can be more clear or convincing. The prophecies of our Lord—the facts related in the Scriptures—the testimony of Heathen writers—and the evidence of Christian Fathers—all

¹ Eus. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 25.

² “ Consulite commentarios vestros ; illic reperietis primum Neronem in hanc sectam, cum maxime Rotæ orientem, Cæsariano gladio ferocisse. Sed tali dedicatore damnationis nostræ etiam gloriamur. Qui enim scit illum, intelligere potest, non nisi grande aliquod bonum a Nerone damnatum.”—Tertull. Apolog. 5.

go to prove that *this particular period* was a period of great and terrible persecution, when Christian blood flowed in torrents; and that the Fifth Seal is a confirmation of our Lord's own words—"The time cometh when whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

Having shown that the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem was an æra of martyrs, above that of any period which preceded it, I invite your attention to the appeal of these martyred saints to God, to "*judge and avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth.*"

"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."¹

Now this vengeance can only refer to that avenging wrath which fell upon Judæa and Jerusalem. No other vengeance came down upon any persecutors at any other age of the Church. Domitian and Diocletian persecuted the Church, but Rome Pagan did not fall in consequence of their persecutions. When Rome Pagan had merged into Rome Papal, the Waldenses and the Albigenses were hunted down like wild beasts by the edicts of Pope Leo X., but Rome Papal only reared her head the higher because of these exterminations. Protestants died by thousands on St. Bartholomew's day; but the Te Deum was chanted forth at Rome in honour of that slaughter, as if Rome had achieved some mighty victory.

Not so with the persecuting Jewish Church. That Church drank deeply of Christian blood, and deeply was that blood avenged. The souls of martyrs from beneath the altar implored vengeance, and that vengeance was at hand. The hour of retribution against those whose unrelenting hatred had followed the disciples "from city to city" had arrived, and the prediction of the Saviour was about to receive its accomplishment:—"Wherefore behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city, *that*

¹ Observe the expression "on them that dwell on the earth"—ἀπὸ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς—an expression only used in the Apocalypse of the inhabitants of Judæa, which is abundantly proved by the many passages in which it is found in contrast to "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;" i. e. heathen who were not Jews.

*upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar; verily I say unto you all these things shall come upon this generation."*¹

Eusebius², in a wonderful manner, illustrates this vengeance as coming in consequence of the shedding of this righteous blood. He gives us an account of the martyrdom of James the Just; not James the brother of John slain by Herod, but James the son of Alphaeus, the brother, or near relation, of our Lord, the first bishop of Jerusalem, called James the Just, on account of his pre-eminent justice.

The Jewish people come together unto James, and desire him to persuade the people not to be led astray after Jesus as the Messiah. They place him upon a wing of the temple, and say to him, "O thou just man, whom we ought all to believe, since the people are led astray after Jesus that was crucified, declare to us what is the door to Jesus that was crucified," and he answered with a loud voice, "Why do ye ask me respecting Jesus the Son of Man: he is now sitting in the heavens, on the right hand of great power, and is about to come, — μέλλει ἔρχεσθαι, is soon about to come, — in the clouds of heaven."

At this they cast him down from the wing of the temple, and began to stone him, saying, "Let us stone James the Just;" and one of them, a fuller, beat out the brains of Justus with a club that he used to beat out clothes.

Clement, whose words are quoted by Eusebius, adds, "Immediately after this, Vespasian invaded and took Judæa."

Hegesippus, quoted also by Eusebius, "So admirable a man was James, that even the wiser part of the Jews were of opinion that this was the cause of the immediate siege of Jerusalem, which happened to them for no other reason than the crime against him."

Josephus declares, "These things happened to the Jews to *avenge* James the Just, who was the brother of him that is called Christ, whom the Jews had slain, notwithstanding his pre-eminent justice."

It is impossible to imagine more satisfactory proof than this. One would almost imagine that the writers in question

¹ Matt. xxiii. 34. 36.

² Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

must have read the prophetic statement before us, — must have heard the martyrs' cry, "How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This blood is poured on the earth like water—it ascends reeking up to heaven—it brings back its response.

"Immediately after this Vespasian invaded and took Judæa."

"This was the cause of the immediate siege of Jerusalem."

"These things happened to the Jews to avenge James the Just."

Then was the martyrs' cry answered, — then was the martyrs' blood avenged, — "when all the righteous blood, from the blood of Abel to that of Zacharias came upon that generation," when the "Lord sent forth his armies, and destroyed *those murderers*¹, and burnt up their city," — when "Jerusalem that killed the prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto her," — when the "city drunk with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus," received double at the hand of the Lord for all her iniquities, — when the prediction had its full accomplishment, "Rejoice over her ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath *avenged* you on her."

I have yet one more point to establish, which is that this vengeance came *soon*. The martyrs are bid to rest for a "*little season*, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled" ("οἱ μέλλοντες ἀποκτείνεσθαι," that should *soon* be killed—the invariable force of the verb μέλλω being to designate something soon about to happen).

This is a powerful argument for the Neronic date of the Apocalypse. The only people and city upon which vengeance was taken for the blood of the martyrs were the people of Judæa and the city of Jerusalem.² That people and city perished

¹ Matt. xxii. 7.—In this parable the Jews are called murderers, because of their persecution of God's holy apostles and prophets; "The remnant took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them."

² If it be objected, why should vengeance come upon Jerusalem for persecutions which took place at Rome, it must be answered that the Jews in every land were the ringleaders of persecutions against the Christians; they were so at Antioch, Iconium, Corinth, and elsewhere. Jerusalem, moreover, was the only city threatened with vengeance for persecution, and upon her "came all the righteous blood shed on all the earth."

almost as soon as the prophetic statements of the Apocalypse were uttered—there was no long interval of time between the prophecy and its accomplishment; the martyrs had only to wait “a little season,” and their number was complete.

How that little season is made to extend from the days of Diocletian to the days of Papal persecution, is what I cannot understand. I am not aware of any passage in Scripture where the expression a “little season,” can be made to signify so long an interval of time. Take, for instance, the corresponding clause of John xvi. 16., “A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.” Here the expression “a little while,” is not used of a long interval of time extending over hundreds of years, but of the interval of time between Christ’s ascension and his coming again to receive his servants unto himself; that it is not used of the period between his death and his ascension, when he was seen of his disciples for forty days, is evident from the clause, “Because I go to the Father.” *In that interval of forty days he had not gone to the Father.* His words to Mary Magdalene sufficiently account for this:—“Touch me not, *for I am not yet ascended unto my Father.*” And not till those forty days were expired did he ascend unto “his Father and their Father, to his God and their God.”

The expression, then, “a little season,” cannot be well used of any lengthened interval of time; on the contrary, it seems to define a short period, such as elapsed between Christ’s ascension to heaven and his coming again to destroy Jerusalem—such as intervened between the martyrdom of Stephen and the martyrdom of James the Just, or that of the last of those, whoever he might have been, who, at the period immediately before Christ’s coming, was faithful unto death, and sealed his testimony with his blood.

It would seem also that Christ’s martyrs were slain up to the very time of his coming to destroy Jerusalem, and that the fire of persecution waxed hotter as the time drew nigh.

We have seen James the Just slain immediately before his coming. “*Immediately after this, Vespasian invaded and took Judæa.*” It is also remarkable that Nero’s persecution was most violent at this particular time. It was during the latter part of Nero’s reign that two apostles, Peter and Paul,

suffered martyrdom at Rome, and James suffered martyrdom at Jerusalem.¹ With what severity that persecution was carried on, we learn from St. Paul's own writings, where we find that they who had been his companions in a thousand dangers, and who had braved with him a thousand perils, quailed before the tribunal of that merciless tyrant; here Demas left him—here Crescens and Titus were not present with him, only Luke was with him; and he, too, seems to have trembled before the wild beast, Nero. "At my first answer, *no man* stood with me; but all men forsook me; I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."² It is not unlikely but that during the invasion of Judæa by the Romans, during the three and a half years of the Jewish war, witnesses for Christ were found who proclaimed his immediate advent, and who were faithful unto death. This is confirmed by the statements of Rev. xi. 3., "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and *kill them*."

I see no difficulty in comprehending why it should be said to the martyrs already slain, that they should "rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and brethren, which should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled;" on the contrary, it would seem that their number was not complete till those were slain who almost saw his coming, and who, like James the Just, stood so near unto his kingdom as to say,

¹ "Let us now suppose, what was only the fact, that as the time of the end drew near, the persecutions and trials of the Christians would become more and more terrible; that not only the Jew with his hierarchy, but even the Roman powers, would join in the tragedy; that the betraying of brother and brother, father and son, and the like, would be still more frequent and more fatal, and in short that iniquity would more and more abound. Under such circumstances it would perhaps seem necessary that some further instruction and encouragement should be afforded to the Church, yet only in its infancy, and harassed in a manner never before witnessed by any human society."—Lee on Prophecy, 292.

"Discipuli quoque diffusi per orbem . . . qui et ipsi a Judæis insequentibus multa perpassi. . . Romæ, postremò, per Neronis sævitiam, sanguinem Christianum seminauerunt."—Tertull., Apol. 21.

² 2 Tim. iv. 16.

“Why do ye ask me respecting the Son of Man; He is now sitting on the right hand of great power, *and is about to come in the clouds of heaven.*”

To recapitulate. I have found no necessity for referring this seal to the persecutions commencing under the reign of Diocletian and reaching to the age of Constantine. I have been unable to recognise any authority beyond that of the merest arbitrary assumption for the date A.D. 300. If the sole reason assigned for the settlement of this date be that the age of Diocletian was an æra of martyrs, why should not the Marian age be fixed upon as well as the Diocletian? or if we are at liberty to make guesses on a subject of this kind, why not a future date, A.D. 3000 (if Dr. Cumming will suffer the world to exist so long), as well as A.D. 300? I cannot think that in a prophecy, purporting to be one of “things which must shortly come to pass,” St. John would have looked for an æra of martyrs beyond his own immediate age, and I have been unable to find that Theodosia, Pamphilus, and other martyrs of the Diocletian persecution, had any idea that their sufferings were prefigured in the Apocalypse, or that they should have to wait for Anne Askew or Sir John Oldcastle. I have not discovered that the Diocletian persecution was avenged on “them that dwell on the earth,” i. e. the Jewish people,—for long ere this persecution commenced, Hadrian had extinguished the last spark of their nationality: neither has it appeared as clear as it ought to do, that the martyrs under the Diocletian persecution could be said to rest “a little season,” *say 1000 years or so*, while they waited for their brethren who should be the victims of “Papal persecution”!!! *Mutato nomine!* Say rather, Protestant bigotry, Protestant uncharitableness, and Protestant persecution.

Why what would Dr. Cumming and all his school have done but for this “Papal persecution.” Had there been no Beast in the Book of Revelation, no Scarlet Lady, all decked with gold and precious stones, no popes and cardinals flaming in scarlet-coloured vestments, he and they would have been starving long ago. Their very means of existence have depended upon the supposed recognition of the subject of “Papal persecution” in the Apocalypse, and the shibboleth of their party ought to be, “Waldenses and Albigenses.” It makes one fairly sick to think of their ingratitude. It is this “Papal persecution,”

this odium theologicum, this intense abomination of Rome and the Roman Catholic religion, founded upon the unscriptural and absurd belief that Rome Papal occupies a place in the Book of God, which has raised them into (on this account) an undeserved reputation, and which continues to exalt them in the scale of popular favour. I desire to denounce this rank injustice against an erring, yet still a cognate Church, with all the energies of my being, and I shall not consider my life wasted if I can loosen the bands of this insensate clamour; not that I have the slightest sympathy with what I consider the manifold errors of the Church of Rome; the only sympathy I have is one which is dear to all English hearts,—sympathy with the oppressed against the oppressor, with Papal dignified patience against Protestant undignified persecution. Papal persecution!!! Why they know, or they ought to know, that there is not one single word from Genesis to Revelation, which by any reasonable man can be tortured into the remotest recognition of a system which then had not even its existence. I repeat it, they know, or they ought to know, that Papal Rome and Roman Catholics are not even hinted at in the Scriptures, and that every tirade fulminated against them from arguments drawn from the Apocalypse, is as harmless as “sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.” And what if this statement should be true? What if the sacred writers never contemplated the remotest allusion to popes and synods? What if Great Babylon should turn out to be Jerusalem after all (as I believe it will), and a closer and more critical examination of the sacred text should roll back the mass of deep-seated prejudice, and blind aggression? What if “Papal persecution” should be found a theme wholly foreign to the time, age, habits of thought, and circumstances of those for whose warning the Apocalypse was written? Then what becomes of that theological bugbear which has been evoked to gratify popular antipathies, and to fan the flame of popular indignation? What becomes of the undignified clamour of Exeter Hall, and the anathemas of its distinguished ornaments? And what also becomes of the immortal interests of those whose ears have been “turned away from the truth unto fables,” who have been taught to believe that their everlasting salvation is bound up with an irreconcilable hatred of the Church of Rome? Papal persecution!!! But I have done with it—as

have not the parties alluded to, as if only to show that enlightened Protestantism of the 19th century shall not be much behind the intolerance of a past age. But if ever a time comes, as I believe it will ere long, when darkness shall not be put for light, or light for darkness; when bitter shall not be put for sweet, or sweet for bitter; when error shall not occupy the seat of truth, or blind conjecture usurp the place of legitimate deduction; when unfounded assertion shall grow pale and dim before the fruits of patient study, and guess-work shall be thought less worthy of credit than valid argument and logical inference; whenever that day shall begin to dawn, (and may God in His mercy hasten the time), then the reign of these short-sighted interpreters will be near its close, and the dreams of these would-be Apocalyptic prophets will be over. Visions of Popes and Councils, Turks and Railways, Mahometans and Russians, Armageddon and Sebastopol, will only serve to provoke the smile of scorn and pity, and authorised exponents of Holy Scripture will feel constrained to be more cautious how they advance such conjectural systems of interpretation, lest haply they might be found offering wanton and indefensible insult to reason, to Scripture, and to God.

To return from this digression to our recapitulation of the Fifth Seal. I have found no necessity whatever for referring this seal to the Diocletian persecution. I have not been able to discover that the Diocletian persecution was avenged on "them that dwell on the earth," *i. e.*, the Jewish people, or that the martyrs under that persecution rested a "little season," when they waited for their fellow-servants who suffered under Papal tyranny. I have not been able to recognise any authority for the assumed date, A.D. 300.

But I have found an æra of martyrs at the period when the book was written — that their blood called to heaven for vengeance, and that the vengeance came — that the vengeance did not come immediately upon their cry, but it came soon — that they had to rest "a little while," during which "little while" the fire of persecution raged more terribly than ever against their fellow-servants and brethren "which should be killed as they were;" and that when that time was expired, "Jerusalem, which killed the prophets, and stoned them which were sent unto her," "was rewarded as she had rewarded them," "and the cup which she had filled, was filled unto her double."

Then was the martyrs' blood avenged, — then was the cry of those “*slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held,*” *i. e.*, of those slain for the public preaching of Christianity [a state of things referring palpably to Apostolic times, and not to a subsequent age of the Church] answered — “The Lord sent forth his armies, and destroyed those *murderers*, and burned up their city.”

LECTURE V.

THE SIXTH SEAL.

REV. vi. 12—17.

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake ; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood ;

13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14. And the heaven departed as a scrawl when it is rolled together ; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains ;

16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb :

17. For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?

WE interpreted the Fifth Seal of the persecutions of the Christian Church under the reign of Nero. We showed that the æra immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem might justly be called an æra of martyrs ; and that the vision might well be seen of souls under the altar “slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” We proved that these persecutions became more violent and decided as the period advanced towards the consummation, and that the “perilous times” of “the last days,” developed in the apostacy which those times induced, afforded satisfactory reason why the martyrs of that age should be told to “rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren which should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

We then proceeded to show that the blood of these martyrs cried to heaven for vengeance. “How long, O Lord ! dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth,” *i. e.* the Jews. And we were enabled to prove not

only that a response was given to the cry of God's elect, but that at the hands of no other people but those emphatically distinguished as "they that dwell on the earth" was this vengeance required. "That upon *you* may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth . . . Verily I say unto you, *all these things shall come upon this generation.*"¹

We then went on to establish the position that the vengeance, for which the elect cried day and night, came *soon*. The martyrs had but to rest "*a little season*," before their fellow servants and brethren, which should be killed as they were, were fulfilled. No long interval of time elapsed between the martyr's cry and the answer to that cry. With the death of James the Just, the brother of our Lord, that vengeance began to arrive. Those were "the days of *vengeance* that all things which are written may be fulfilled."²

I am content to leave this interpretation to the judgment of every candid and dispassionate mind. The Apocalypse itself offers no reason why the Fifth Seal should be referred to the Diocletian persecution beyond that of the "Doctrine of Resemblances," which it is evident would apply with equal force to any other persecution. History does not say that any retribution was exercised upon the dwellers of Judæa for the cruelties of Diocletian; nor does the common use of language justify the idea that "*a little season*" can, with any propriety, be expanded into hundreds of years. A critical examination of the sacred text does not lead us to conclude that the contemporaneous martyrdom "of their fellow-servants, also, and their brethren that should—(*soon*)—be killed as they were" can be made to refer with any propriety to sufferers of a distant age and of a distinct persecution. Neither does a due attention to the immediate accomplishment of the prophecy warrant our placing the victims of Jewish enmity and Papal tyranny in the same calendar.

On the other hand, History does say that the times for which we have fixed the interpretation of this seal, were times of great and hitherto unheard of persecution.³ History does say

¹ Matt. xxiii. 35, 36.

² Luke, xxi. 22.

³ It is worthy of observation that as the persecution under Nero was the first authorised persecution of Christianity, so the war under Nero was the

that this persecution was avenged on the dwellers in a particular land ; and that land, the land of Judæa. History does say that this vengeance came soon, " So that they who peruse the history may know, in some measure, *that the divine vengeance did not long delay* to visit them for their iniquity against the Christ of God."¹ History does say that " The divine justice *for their crimes against Christ and his Apostles*, finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evil doers from the earth."²

And here let me call attention to the narrow limits within which the system of interpretation which we have adopted compels us to restrict, not simply the exposition of this particular seal, but the exposition of the entire book. We cannot claim for ourselves the liberty which is taken by those from whom we differ. We dare not make a leap of 200 years, and explain this seal of the Diocletian persecution. An interpretation must be found suited to the day and age of the Apocalypse, or our system falls to the ground. There must be no roaming over one century after another to discover some event to agree with the prediction ; there must be no turning over the leaves of Gibbon, or any other historian of subsequent times, to find some coincidence which may suit the seal ; there must be no treating hundreds of years as if they were so many days, and establishing a system of chronology of which the book itself does not say one word.

But we have laid down certain premises, which confine our interpretation within very narrow limits. We assert that the book was written previous to the destruction of Jerusalem ; and we must find an interpretation for it within those limits ; *and what is more, we must find an interpretation for the whole of it within those limits.* If this cannot be done, our system is good for nothing, and falls to the ground. But if this can be done, the inference is unavoidable, the interpretation must be right. Add to this, if we are enabled to present an intelligible and con-

commencement of the extermination of the Jewish people ; and as in that war Jewish Christians were not recognisable from Jews, inasmuch as both followed the temple service, not only would the Jewish Christians be required to worship the gods of their conquerors, but they would be exposed to the persecutions of the Romans, as well as of their own countrymen.

¹ Eus. Eccles. Hist., lib. iii. cap. 5.

² Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 5.

sistent explanation of the whole book upon this principle, we may take it for granted that we are correct with regard to the question of the date of the Apocalypse ; for if, according to our opponents, the whole history of the world and of the Church, from the commencement of Christianity down to the end of time, is not too wide a sphere in which to find a suitable interpretation ; and if, according to the premises we have laid down, an interpretation can be found concentrated within the limits of a very few years, (such a space as elapsed between St. John's banishment to Patmos, in the latter part of Nero's reign, and the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70), there is no resisting the conclusion that we are proceeding upon a correct principle. In other words, if we are able to compress within the history of three or four years what they with extreme difficulty, and oftentimes by means of fanciful interpretation, scatter over a period of 2,000 years, the probability amounts almost to demonstration that we are not in any grievous error with regard either to the date or the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

SIXTH SEAL.

“ And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake ; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.

“ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

“ And the heaven departed as a scrawl when it is rolled together ; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

“ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

“ And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

“For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?”¹

According to the plan which I have adopted, I give first the substance of Dr. Cumming’s exposition.

“This language, strong as it is, cannot describe the day of judgment, for the sequel, as well as the whole chronology² of the Apocalypse disproves this.” He then gives texts to show that similar language is used of less awful events than the day of judgment.³

“We may, in fact we must, therefore, apply the language of the Sixth Seal to some great revolution less conclusive than the final judgment. That revolution we believe to have been the final downfall of Paganism and the adoption of Christianity by the Emperor Constantine, in the fourth century. Our chronology also confirms this application. We can scarcely conceive a transition more stupendous; the champions of Paganism, Maximin, Galerius, and Diocletian, were crushed. Its sun set, its stars were quenched, its firmament covered with blackness; and before the majestic progress of the Christian religion, lifted from the depths of depression to the very highest platform of imperial grandeur and national power, literally and truly the opposing kings, and generals, and soldiers, and free-men fled; Christianity reigned at that day without a rival.”

“These seem to me,” he adds, “rational, consistent, and historical illustrations of the symbols referred to. I have read nothing at all to disprove my interpretations.”

Now, does any intelligent and reasonable man see any indi-

¹ Rev. vi. 12—17.

² This is the stumbling-block in the way of these expositions. I am not aware of any system of chronology in the Apocalypse: whatever there is must be of the briefest kind, for it is a prophecy of things which “*must shortly be done.*” Added to this, the same events are treated of in the last equally with the first pages of the Apocalypse. Take, for instance, the coming of Christ, which is the exordium, the middle, and the finale of this mysterious volume; the New Jerusalem spoken of, chap. iii. 12., as well as in chap. xxi.; the “great city,” devoted to destruction, everywhere mentioned throughout the Revelation; the woes of the Apocalypse everywhere spoken of as falling upon the princes, merchants, and inhabitants of Judæa. This reiteration of the same events, interwoven as it is with every page and line, makes it morally certain that no more fatal hindrance to the legitimate interpretation of this book was ever devised than that which supposes the existence of a system of chronology.

³ Jer. iv. 23, 24, 28, 29.; Hos. x. 8.

cation of the triumph of Christianity over Paganism in this seal? Such a triumph would be more fitly shadowed forth by emblems significant of victory, than by figures descriptive of calamity and misfortune. The sun black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon as blood, and the stars of heaven falling, and the heaven departing as a scroll, and the kings of the earth hiding themselves and calling on the mountains and rocks to cover them, are figures which can only be used with propriety of calamitous events. And the whole analogy of Scripture requires that they should be used only of such events. To explain symbols expressive of wrath and punishment of events connected with triumph and victory, is surely a strange inversion of the legitimate principles of Scriptural interpretation. As well might we suppose that the symbols under which Isaiah describes the desolation of Idumæa, depicted its glory and greatness, or that the day of the Lord of the prophet Joel was a delineation of the triumphs of Israel. Besides which, how can Maximin, Galerius, or Diocletian, be called "the kings of the earth," Judæa; or how can "the wrath of the Lamb" be transformed into "the majestic progress of the Christian religion"? I confess I cannot see the faintest allusion either to Maximin, Galerius, or Diocletian. I can see nothing which leads me to suppose that this seal represents the Christian religion "lifted from the depths of depression to the highest platform of national grandeur." The only grandeur I can see in this seal is the grandeur of dismay, and terror, and despair: if ever language was emblematical of wrath and woe, and agony and distress, it is the language of this magnificent symbol. No wonder that a distinguished painter¹ should have supposed that it shadowed forth the awful day of judgment. No wonder that the imagination should have been betrayed, and the judgment warped, by the majestic imagery of this superb figure. It would seem to me that terror, and not Christianity, reigns under this symbol, "without a rival;" and that the

¹ Danby's "Last Judgment." — One of the most striking figures in the painting is that of a slave bursting his fettered hands asunder, and welcoming the coming Deity; we hardly need to be reminded that the bondman equally with the freeman *hides himself* in the dens and rocks of the mountains.

triumph designated is not the triumph of religion, but the triumph of desolation and despair.

I proceed to offer a somewhat different explanation of this seal. And, first, I would observe, in common with those from whom I differ, that this language, strong as it is, does not necessarily describe the destruction of material things supposed to be consequent on the day of judgment. "We must not," says Dr. Lee, "understand by such expressions as 'the heaven departed as a scrawl,' 'every mountain and island were moved out of their places,' any such physical phenomenon as the words literally imply; for if the heavens should have so departed, and the mountains so moved, how could the kings of the earth have hid themselves within the latter?" Nothing is more common in the Scriptures, than that great changes, especially great calamities, should be indicated by earthquakes, tempests, eclipses of the heavenly bodies, and the falling of stars to the earth. This is easily accounted for when we remember that the ancients were ignorant of the movements of the heavenly bodies,—that an eclipse threw them into terror, like the Peruvians,—that they were unable to account for the meteoric appearances called falling stars, and supposed that they literally fell to the earth. Hence they employed this language to denote great events, and especially calamitous events; it would be absurd to interpret such language literally, or to suppose that the sun literally became black as sackcloth of hair, and the stars literally fell to the earth.

Isaiah, xxxiv. 4., thus describes the destruction of Idumæa :—"All the host of heaven shall be dissolved; the heavens shall be rolled together as a scrawl, and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree; for my sword shall be bathed in heaven, behold it shall come down upon Idumæa."

Joel describes the invasion of a hostile army numerous as locusts under a similar figure¹ :—"The day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness; a great people and a strong; . . . a fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate

¹ Joel, ii. 2. Compare the locust army, Rev. ix.

wilderness, and nothing shall escape them ; *the earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.*"¹

St. Peter explains the prophecy of Joel respecting the last days, of the terrific events which should intervene between the day of Pentecost and "the great and notable day of the Lord." "*This is that* which was spoken of by the prophet Joel ; it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . . *and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath ; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke : the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come.*"²

These, and many other passages might be adduced, prove to a demonstration that great and calamitous events are frequently shadowed forth in the Scriptures under the figure of convulsions of the heavenly bodies, and strange and extraordinary appearances of the sun, and moon, and stars.

Now, did our Lord predict his awful coming to destroy Jerusalem under similar emblems ? The language of the three Gospels, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, is almost identical with that of the seal under our consideration.

Matt., xxiv. 29, 30.—"*Immediately after the tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Mark, xiii. 24—26.—"*But in those days, after that tribulation*, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars from heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken, and *then* shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, with power and great glory."

Luke, xxi. 24—27.—"*Jerusalem shall be trodden down*

¹ Joel, ii. 1, 2, 3—10.

² Acts, ii. 10.

of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth ('*τῆς γῆς*' the land of Judæa), distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and *then* shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory."

It is evident that these grand and terrible descriptions refer to events which were to take place at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is impossible, without doing the most gross and painful violence to honest criticism, to interpret them of any future time. If words have any meaning, these events took place "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days.*" "*In those days, after that tribulation,*"—at the period when "*Jerusalem was trodden down of the Gentiles.*"

They took place, moreover, during the lifetime of the generation to whom these words were addressed; no disquisitions on the meaning of the word "*γενεα*," "generation," can weigh against the positive truth here stated. The whole subject of Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi. is connected with the time of our Lord's coming. In each of the Gospels his disciples ask Him to tell them when that time should be.

Matt. xxiv. 3. — "Tell us *when* shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end¹ of the world?"

Mark, xiii. 4. — "Tell us *when* shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

Luke, xxi. 7. — "Master, but *when* shall these things be, and what sign shall there be when these things come to pass?"

And then He told them the time, that it should be within the lifetime of that generation, that when they saw the woes coming upon Jerusalem, they might know that "it was near, even at their doors." Nothing but determined prejudice and an un-

¹ *Συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος* — the end of the age, i. e. of the Mosaic economy. Compare Heb. ix. 26. "*νῦν δὲ ἅπαξ, ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων*" — but now once in the end of the world," i. e. the end of the Mosaic economy.

conquerable clinging to previously formed opinions can resist the evidence.

Matt. xxiv. 32—34.—“Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh, so likewise ye when ye *shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors* : verily I say unto you, *this generation* shall not pass away till *all* these things be fulfilled.”

Mark, xiii. 28—30.—“Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near : so ye in like manner, *when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors*. Verily I say unto you, that *this generation* shall not pass, till *all* these things be done.”

St. Luke¹ has a little variation, but the time when all this should take place is unmistakably declared.

Luke, xxi. 29—32.—“And he spake to them a parable ; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees ; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh^{*} at hand. So likewise ye, *when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand*. Verily I say unto you, *This generation* shall not pass away till *all* be fulfilled.”

It is poor theology to explain this primarily of our Lord's second advent at some yet distant period. For my own part I feel heartily ashamed of the way in which I have often interpreted many of these passages in my public teaching ; in whatever sense they may be regarded as referring to an advent yet to come, there can be no reasonable doubt but that they refer in their primary sense to the advent which then took place. Neither can I believe that in St. Matt. xxiv. it will be found that “two distinct sets of predictions run together in artless parallel,” and that “while a period for the fulfilment of the first

¹ The only variation of any importance between St. Luke and the other two Evangelists, is that St. Luke calls the coming of our Lord to destroy Jerusalem the coming of the kingdom of God ; the inference is, that kingdom was established at his coming. Compare “His appearing and his kingdom,” (2 Tim. iv. 1.) ; “The Son of Man coming in his kingdom,” (Matt. xvi. 28.) ; “Lord remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom,” ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου (Luke, xxiii. 42.).

series, the human judgment, is fixed within the lifetime of a generation, we, on the contrary, are told of the last judgment, "Of that hour knoweth no man, neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father."¹

It appears to me, from a careful examination of Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., and Luke xxi., that one plain simple question is answered by our Lord. *That question is a question of time.* In reply to the request of the disciples that He would tell them the period of his coming, his answer was that it should take place during the lifetime of that generation, that they should recognise its approach by the foregoing signs, but that the day and the hour were hidden even from Him. Hence "the times and seasons" are said to be put in the Father's power. (Acts i. 7.) Hence the Father is said to show the manifestation of the Son in "his own times," *καιροῖς, ἰδίους, i. e.,* times known only to himself.² Hence God is said to *give* unto his Son the knowledge of his speedy Apocalypse.³

Now St. Luke shows satisfactorily that our Lord's answer embraced no "artless parallel" of homogeneous predictions, but referred only to one period and to one event; for *after* "the fulfilment of the first series, the human judgment, (which) is fixed within the lifetime of a generation," and during the supposed period of the last judgment, the disciples are bid to pray that they might escape the desolation impending over them, and which was immediately about to take place. "Take heed to *yourselves*, &c. . . . and so that day come upon *you* unawares, for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth; *watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass*, and to stand before the Son of Man."⁴

How could it be said of the day of universal judgment, "as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth," *πασῆς τῆς γῆς*, Judæa; or how could the words expressive of the predicted calamities on Jerusalem be applicable to the future judgment of mankind, "Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy *to escape all these things that shall come to pass*, (*τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι*, that shall soon come to pass,) and to stand (as in judgment) before the

¹ Rational Godliness, Sermon 23., Rev. Rowland Williams.

² 1 Tim. vi. 15.

³ Rev. i. 1.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 34—36.

Son of Man"? How could the warnings, *particularly addressed to the disciples*—"Take heed to *yourselves* . . . lest that day come upon *you* unawares . . . watch *ye* therefore . . . that *ye* may . . . escape," &c. be supposed to refer to a general judgment in the far distant future; or how could it be thought that the imaginary division of the prophecy commencing at the words "of *THAT* day and of *THAT* hour" could be made to relate to any other day *than the day before alluded to*? Be it then remembered, that had there been any distinguishing emphasis attached to the words "*That* day" (as implying a day distinct from the coming of Christ to destroy Jerusalem), *which there is not*, and had there been a period assigned for the fulfilment of the one parallel of the homogeneous prophecy, whilst no period is assigned for the other, (*which is not the case, for the prophecy is one and the same throughout*), all this would have been completely unsettled by the fact, that *after the supposed fulfilment of the first prediction, and during the supposed scenes of the last judgment*, even on "*that day*" of which no man knew, and which was to come upon them "*unawares*," the disciples are bid to pray that they might "*escape all these things that shall come to pass*, and to stand before the Son of Man."¹ I cannot think, then, if "all prophecy has a primary contemporaneous application," that this prophecy of our Lord, so guarded with respect to the time of its accomplishment, and which the disciples and first Christians evidently believed to be of immediate fulfilment, would in its primary sense be intended by our Lord to refer partly to the destruction of Jerusalem, and partly to the day of judgment, partly to the events of A.D. 70, partly to the events of A.D. . . . I cannot think that "two distinct sets of predictions" would thus have been mixed up by our Lord in inextricable confusion, or that his love and consideration would have prompted Him so to mislead his disciples and his Church of future times; nor do I imagine that an argument of this kind would be put forward as conclusive, was it not felt that some

¹ That the words "all these things that shall come to pass" refer to the scenes accompanying the desolation of Jerusalem, is not only certified by the expression τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι, but nearly the same words are used in verse 31. during the period which is thought to be marked out by the lifetime of that generation, "So likewise ye when ye see these things come to pass," ὅταν ἴδῃτε ταῦτα γινόμενα—an expression evidently identical with the subsequent one of v. 36.: "All these things that shall come to pass."

great difficulty existed which it was necessary thus to overcome. But we shall be nothing nearer the truth for any forced and unnatural construction which we may put upon holy Scripture, and it is evident that the argument now combated had no existence, either in the mind of Him who spake, or of those who listened to his words.

But to return to the analogy proposed to be instituted between the Sixth Seal and the predictions of our Lord.

It will be interesting to compare the two accounts as they stand in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse.

SIXTH SEAL.

"The sun became black as sackcloth of hair."

"The moon became as blood."

"The stars of heaven fell unto earth."

"The heaven departed as a scrawl."

"Every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

"The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

"For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 12—17.

OUR LORD'S PREDICTIONS.

"The sun shall be darkened." Mark, xiii. 24.

"The moon shall not give her light." Mark, xiii. 24.

"The stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. xxiv. 29.

"The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Matt. xxiv. 29.

"Upon the earth distress of nations,—the sea and the waves roaring." Luke, xxi. 25.

"Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us: for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke, xxiii. 30, 31.

"There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people." Luke, xxi. 23.

It will be seen at once from this comparison, that the identity is perfect between the seal and the predictions of our Lord. Now, whether we interpret this language of great changes, or of calamitous events, or of miraculous phenomena, the point for us to determine is, did occurrences corresponding to the symbols take place at that time?

Did any great changes then take place? A change took

place then which shook the world — a change compared with which the revolution occasioned by the final downfall of Paganism is hardly fit to be mentioned. The change to which I allude was the breaking up of that dispensation which had lasted for 2000 years, and which God Himself had given to his own people. Then, if you will, “the champions of *Judaism* were crushed; its sun set, its stars were quenched, its firmament covered with blackness; and before the majestic power of the Christian religion the opposing kings, and generals, and soldiers, and freemen fled.” If this seal is to be interpreted of change and revolution, [an interpretation not altogether satisfactory], no change has ever affected the destinies of mankind so much as the change which was introduced at that particular time.

Or if you interpret this seal of calamitous events, of wrath, and terror, and despair, falling upon a particular people, where will you find so exact, so literal a fulfilment, as in the tribulation of those days — “Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be: and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.” “In those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.” “These be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled; but woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.” Then, indeed, did they call upon the mountains to fall on them, and on the rocks to cover them. “The destruction,” says Josephus, “which then took place exceeded all the destructions that either God or man ever brought upon the world.”¹

Or if you interpret this seal of those miraculous phenomena which our Saviour said should accompany his coming [an interpretation to which I feel most disposed to accede], the all-directing providence of God has so appointed it, that evidence independent of the Scriptures should be given, that such miraculous phenomena did attend his coming to destroy Jerusalem.

Tacitus² informs us — “Such prodigies had happened, as this nation, which is superstitious enough in its own way, would

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.

² Tac. Hist. lib. v. cap. 13.

not agree to expiate by the ceremonies of the Roman religion, nor would they atone the gods by sacrifices and vows, as they used to do on the like occasions. Armies were seen to fight in the sky, and their armour looked of a bright light colour, and the temple shone with sudden flashes of fire out of the clouds. The doors of the temple were opened on a sudden, and a voice greater than human was heard, that the gods were retiring; and at the same time there was a great motion perceived, as if they were going out of it, which some esteemed to be causes of terror."

Here, then, you have an historian of those times, who tells you, in his own heathen fashion, that these prodigies happened because the Jews would not agree to expiate the ceremonies of the Roman religion, nor atone the gods by sacrifices and vows. He points out the character of these prodigies as prodigies appearing chiefly in the heavens, and especially mentions the circumstance that "a voice greater than human was heard." Altogether, his description leads us fairly to conclude that great and miraculous signs took place at that period; and that the Jewish dispensation closed, as it had begun, in the midst of stupendous and awful miracles.

Josephus¹ gives us a much more detailed account of the miraculous phenomena of that extraordinary period. He says:—"Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers (the false prophets), while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretel their future desolation; but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them. Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet that continued a whole year. Thus also, before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Zanthicus, and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone around the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day-time, which light lasted for half-an-hour. At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple.

“Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner court of the temple, which was of brass and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord, about the sixth hour of the night. Now, those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it, who then came up thither, and, not without great difficulty, was able to shut the gate again.

“Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one-and-twentieth day of the month Artemisius, a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared ; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals, for before sun-setting chariots and troops of soldiers, in their armour, were seen running about among the clouds and surrounding of cities. Moreover, at that feast, which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, ‘Let us remove hence.’

“Now, if any one consider these things, he will find that God takes care of mankind, *and, by all ways possible, fore-shews to our race what is for their preservation* ; but these men interpreted some of these signals according to their own pleasure, and some of them they utterly despised, until their madness was demonstrated both by the taking of their city and their own destruction.”

It is impossible not to notice the honesty with which these prodigies are recorded—the minute particulars, such as the day of the month, the hour of the night. The fact mentioned, which many were living to deny, if it could be denied, that the account of one of these prodigies would seem a fable, *were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such*

signals. The assertion made, *that these signs were so evident, and did so plainly foretel their future desolation.* All this gives weight to this testimony of Josephus, and proves that the period of the destruction of Jerusalem was a period signalled by prodigy and miracle.

It gives additional weight to this testimony, that it is confirmed by Eusebius¹, but as he does little more than quote the words of Josephus, I shall not deem it necessary to repeat them.

Observe then, “these signs which were so evident, and which did so plainly foretel their future desolation” — “these denunciations which God made to them,” which “they did not consider” — these “prodigious and incredible phenomena, the account of which would seem to be a fable, were they not, related by those that saw them, and were not the events that followed of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals” — these “signals,” which they “interpreted according to their own pleasure,” some of which they “utterly despised, until their madness was demonstrated both by the taking of the city and their own destruction,” took place at this time. Our Lord declared, “there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity.” The Sixth Seal discloses “the sun black as sackcloth of hair, the moon as blood, the stars falling to the earth, and the heavens departing as a scrawl;” *and a Heathen, a Jewish, and a Christian historian, the only historians of those days* whose histories have come down to us, tell us that great and marvellous prodigies appeared.

They appeared at the downfall of no other city, ancient or modern. No historian has recorded anything at all similar; it is a unique point in history. Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, fell, but no signs preceded their destruction. Jerusalem was previously destroyed by the Babylonians, but without accompanying signs. Rome was sacked by Alaric; Constantinople by the Euphratean Turks; but no miracle heralded in those desolations.

Not so, however, the Jerusalem of our Lord's day. The finger of God was visible in her destruction. The sun of Judaism set, as it rose, amidst stupendous prodigies. The miracle of Sinai

was reflected in the conflagration of Mount Moriah, and the conquest of Canaan renewed in the invasion of Judæa. The "word spoken by angels" was re-echoed in the "voice greater than human," and the presence of the Deity on the Holy Mount repeated in the awful coming of the Son of Man. The Jewish dispensation closed, as it had begun, in miracle, and with the last flickerings of the dying embers of God's holy house, angelic ministers of vengeance forsook the land they had so often trod in visits of love and mercy. Miracle and prodigy disappeared from this earth until that day when they shall once more disclose a present Deity, and a faithful and avenging God.

In the midst of these scenes of terror, what is the state of the enemies of our God and of his Christ? They are represented as overwhelmed with fear.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men¹, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand." ²

I call your attention to the circumstance, that they hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains. Judæa was full of such hiding-places. A German commentator has observed, this expression seems to mark out particularly the rocks and caves of Palestine which afforded places of shelter for fugitives. Jerusalem especially abounded with such subterranean retreats. This made Titus surround the city with a wall, to prevent the introduction of food into the beleaguered city through these subterranean passages.

Now is there evidence of "the kings of the earth," the masters of Jerusalem, with their chief captains and mighty men hiding themselves at this time in these subterranean caverns. The city at the time of its beleaguering was in the hands of three factions, headed by John of Gischala, Simon,

¹ Μεγιστᾶνες καὶ χιλιάρχοι, "princes of Judæa;" thus, Mark, vi. 21.: "Herod made a feast to his lords, high captains," μεγιστᾶνες καὶ χιλιάρχοι.

² Rev. vi. 15.

and Eleazar. These were the kings¹ of the earth. Of two of these kings there is evidence to prove that they did hide themselves in this manner.

Josephus tells us, "The last hope which supported the tyrants *was in the caves and caverns under ground*, whither if they could once fly they did not expect to be searched for. This was no better than a dream of theirs, for they were not able to lie hid either from God or from the Romans."²

In another passage he tells us of the capture of John in these caverns. "For to speak only of what was publicly known, the Romans slew some of them, some they carried captives, and others *they made search for under ground*, and when they found where they were, they broke up the ground and slew all they met with . . . for a great deal of treasure was found in these caverns. As for John, he wanted food, together with his brethren, in these caverns, and begged that the Romans would give him their right hand for his security, which he had proudly rejected before."³

The historian gives us the account of the capture of Simon, another of the kings of the earth, in these subterranean pits.

"This Simon, while the Roman army were laying the city waste, took *the most faithful of his friends with him*, and let himself and them down into a subterraneous cavern that was not visible above ground."

Being obliged to come up out of his hiding-place for want of food, it is added, "this rise of his out of the ground did also occasion the discovery of a great number of others who had *hidden themselves under ground*."⁴

Here, then, you have the kings of the earth, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, concealing themselves in terror in caves and pits. It is expressly said they did so, while "the Roman army were laying the city waste," and the vanity of this attempt at concealment is not unnoticed by the historian,

¹ *I. e.* the rulers of Judæa: this is explained, Acts, iv. 26.; "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ; for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus both Herod and Pontius Pilate were gathered together,"—"principes Palestinæ."—Schleusner.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 7.

³ Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 9.

⁴ Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 2.

for he says, "this was no better than a dream of theirs, for they were not able to lie hid either *from God or from the Romans.*"

I shall merely observe of the cry of terror which, under this seal, proceeds from these fugitives, where they are represented as saying to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," that it is the very language which our Lord said would be used at that miserable time.

"Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us; for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"¹

To recapitulate. The seal discloses great and terrible phenomena. The sun black as sackcloth of hair, the moon as blood, the stars falling to earth, and the heaven departing as a scroll. If this be merely indicative of mighty revolution and change, the world has never known so wondrous a revolution as the change from Judaism to Christianity. If it be interpreted of calamitous events, "in those days was affliction such as was not from the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be." If it be interpreted of supernatural appearances, the history of that time abounds with prodigy and miracle.

Under this reign of terror, the Jewish leaders and the Jewish people generally flee to hide themselves from the wrath to come. The strange coincidence is abundantly proved, that they did so hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and to complete the evidence, the very words which our Lord said they would use proceed from their trembling lips.

Such I conceive to be the fair and legitimate interpretation of this seal. I cannot see in it any traces whatever of the revolution which took place in the Roman empire after the persecutions of Diocletian. I cannot recognise the faintest allusion to the change from Paganism to Christianity in the days of Constantine. I cannot suppose that Maximin, or Galerius, or Diocletian are kings of the Jewish earth, or that they can, with any propriety of interpretation, be said to hide

¹ Luke, xxiii. 30, 31.

themselves from the wrath of the Lamb. I do not conceive that the imagery of this seal is expressive of triumph and victory; and as for the date assigned to it, there is not the slightest proof beyond mere assumption. I can only wonder that such interpretations could have filled Exeter Hall with thousands of attentive listeners, and that persons possessing common sense should accede to statements which have no better foundation than indistinct, and too often, imaginary coincidence.

I commend the explanation now offered to your prayerful study and investigation, humbly beseeching God to pardon errors which are unintentional, and to establish us more and more in the truth of his Holy Word.

LECTURE VI.

GOD'S SEALED ONES.

REV. vii. 1—17.

1. And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5. Of the tribe of Juda *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Reuben *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Gad *were sealed twelve thousand.*

6. Of the tribe of Aser *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Nephtalim *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Manasses *were sealed twelve thousand.*

7. Of the tribe of Simeon *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Levi *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Issachar *were sealed twelve thousand.*

8. Of the tribe of Zabulon *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Joseph *were sealed twelve thousand.* Of the tribe of Benjamin *were sealed twelve thousand.*

9. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

WITH a confessedly difficult subject before us, like that in which we are now engaged, I cannot think the system which we have adopted of briefly recapitulating the main points of the preceding Lecture will be altogether unacceptable. In this Lecture it will be all the more necessary, inasmuch as we are still engaged in the investigation of the subject of the Sixth Seal, the seal not being completed until the close of Chap. vii.

We began by proving that the allegorical language of the seal was identical with that used by our Lord, when describing his coming to destroy Jerusalem—that the great earthquake, the sun black as sackcloth of hair, the moon as blood, the stars falling to the earth, the heavens departing as a scroll, every mountain and island removed out of their places, the kings of the earth hiding themselves, and calling upon the mountains and rocks to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb, was only a fuller development of our Lord's predictions:—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."¹

We went on to show you that these passages could not refer to some day of judgment yet future, but to our Lord's immediate coming to destroy Jerusalem. *Thrice* is that parable repeated, by St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke—

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree, when his branch is

¹ Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.

tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh, so likewise ye, *when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*¹

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree: when her branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so ye in like manner, *when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.*”²

“And he spake to them a parable, behold the fig tree and all the trees, when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand, so likewise ye, *when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*”³

Thrice is the precise period defined as a period within the lifetime of the then existing generation.

“Verily I say unto you, *this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*—heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”⁴

“Verily I say unto you, *this generation shall not pass till all these things be done*, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”⁵

“Verily I say unto you, *this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled*, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”⁶

We then spoke of the signs which heralded in his coming—we explained the wonderful phenomena of the Sixth Seal, of those extraordinary prodigies which then took place. We proved from the only writers who have given a history of those eventful times, that at that period miraculous signs and wonders happened, such as had never happened before—the star resembling a sword which stood over the city—the comet which continued a whole year—the light at the ninth hour of the night shining about the holy house—the eastern gate of the temple opening of its own accord—the chariots and troops of heavenly combatants in the clouds—the quaking felt, and the voices heard in the temple. “These were the signs,” says the

¹ Matt. xxiv. 32, 33.

² Luke, xxi. 29–31.

³ Mark, xiii. 30, 31.

² Mark, xiii. 28, 29.

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.

⁶ Luke, xxi. 31, 32.

historian, "which were so evident, and did so plainly foretel their future desolation."¹

We were enabled to show that two kings of the Jewish earth, with their chief captains and mighty men,—“a great number of others,”—hid themselves in fear and terror in the subterranean caverns with which Jerusalem abounded; and that two of these leaders, John and Simon, were taken out of these dens, where they had concealed themselves, the one to grace the Roman triumph, and then to be slain, the other to be condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?”

Our subject in this Lecture is the sealing of God's elect previous to the coming destruction; and before entering upon the explanation, I shall endeavour to point out the identity between the seal and the predictions of our Lord. We have already compared the identity between a part of the Sixth Seal and the prophecies of Christ in the Gospels. It will be satisfactory to find that the remainder corresponds with the same predictions. With a view of presenting the whole in a connected form, I shall proceed, at the risk of seeming to be fond of repetitions, to exhibit the whole of the Sixth Seal as strictly identical with the predictions of our Lord.

¹ Is it because these signs are not of a sufficiently majestic character, according to our own preconceived notions, that we think the language of our Lord must be interpreted of scenes yet future? One thing is certain, that the power and glory of that terrible coming made the kings of the earth, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth—that heavenly and human agency combined struck terror into the hearts of the princes of Judæa. If Tacitus, a heathen historian, should have been beguiled into anything like an imitation of the miracles recorded by Livy, or other heathen writers, this accusation cannot be brought against Josephus; for he assigns these miracles to the agency of God, and declares that they were witnessed by many.

SIXTH SEAL.

"The sun became black as sackcloth of hair."

"The moon became as blood."

"The stars of heaven fell to the earth."

"The heaven departed as a scroll."

"Every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

"The kings of the earth, &c. . . . hid themselves, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

"For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand."

"And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth," —

"Holding the four winds of the earth."

"Hurt not the earth, &c. . . . till we have sealed the servants of God on their foreheads." — Rev. vi. and vii.

OUR LORD'S PREDICTIONS.

"The sun shall be darkened." — Mark, xiii. 24.

"The moon shall not give her light." — Mark, xiii. 24.

"The stars shall fall from heaven." — Matt. xxiv. 29.

"The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." — Matt. xxiv. 29.

"Upon the earth distress of nations, the sea and the waves roaring." — Luke, xxi. 25.

"Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us; for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done on the dry?" — Luke, xxiii. 30, 31.

"There shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people." — Luke, xxi. 23.

"And he shall send his angels." — Matt. xxiv. 31.

"And they shall gather . . . from the four winds." — Matt. xxiv. 31.

"And then shall he send his angels and shall gather together his elect from the four winds from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." — Mark, xiii. 27.

The identity is complete, and the vision of the Apocalypse is only the echo of the predictions in the Gospels:—

The sun black.

The sun darkened.

The moon as blood.

The moon not giving her light.

The stars falling to the earth.

The stars falling from heaven.

The *heaven* departing as a scroll.
The powers of the *heavens* shaken.

Mountains and *islands* moved.
The *sea and the waves* roaring.

The *cry to the mountains and rocks*.
The *cry to the mountains and hills*.¹

The great day of his *wrath*.
The *wrath* upon this people.

The *Angels* sealing the *servants of God*.
The *Angels* gathering the *elect*.

Holding the *four winds*.
Gathering the elect from the *four winds*.

Standing on the *four corners of the earth*.
From the *uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven*.

Here, to say the least, there is a parallelism of the most marked character between the Sixth Seal and the predictions of our Lord. The resemblance is too close to be accidental, too complete to be fortuitous. Not only is there a perfect identity of language and figure, but what serves to bind the analogy still closer, they both relate to the same people, and to the same period.

Nothing can be more evident than that the Sixth Seal refers to the woes about to come upon the Jewish people.

The angels stand on "the four corners of the earth"—Judæa; they hold "the winds of the earth, that the winds shall not blow on the earth"—Judæa; the "servants of God" are sealed "from the earth"—Judæa; and this is made matter of certainty, not only because the twelve tribes are enumerated by name, but because the 144,000, said to be "redeemed from the earth" (Rev. xiv. 3.), are put into contrast with "the great multitude which no man could number of all nations, and

¹ If this remarkable identity should be thought demonstrative proof that the predictions of the Apocalypse and of our Lord relate to the same events, much light will be thrown upon the expression, "The kings of the earth." There can be no reasonable doubt what people are alluded to. — Luke, xxiii. 30. In the Apocalypse "the kings of the earth" (Judæa) utter the same cry.

kindreds, and people, and tongues." Making it morally certain that no other people could be meant but those who always held themselves distinct from the Gentiles.

I need scarcely observe, that the predictions of our Lord with which the Sixth Seal has been compared relate likewise to that peculiar people. As in the Old Testament the Gentiles are only introduced when their history is interwoven with that of the Jewish people, so under the New. The Jew, under both dispensations, is ever the principal theme of the warnings and promises of Holy Writ, and nothing can be more certain than that the predictions of our Lord to which I have alluded relate solely to them.

Dr. Cumming¹ explains the sealing of the 144,000 of the gathering of the true Church out of the visible Church, which had become corrupt in the days of Constantine; he says, "Immediately after this exaltation of Christianity (the exaltation which he supposes to be described in the former part of the Sixth Seal), there follows the sealing of 144,000. That, as I explained to you, signifies that Christianity, in the hours of its prosperity, suffered more than it did in the days of its depression; that the Gospel was a purer and a nobler thing when crushed by the persecutions of men, than when it nestled beneath the shadow of the imperial throne of Constantine; and whether it was right or whether it was wrong thus to elevate the Gospel, it is matter of fact, that in the catacombs and caves of the earth the Church retained her garments unsullied, her communion with her Lord unbroken; but the moment the heads that were exposed to the tempests were crowned with mitres, and the catacombs exchanged for cathedrals, she laid aside her robes of beauty and glory, put on the gorgeous dress of Cæsar, became shorn of her real strength and her attributes of grandeur, and ground, a miserable drudge, at Cæsar's mill and at Cæsar's bidding."

What this has to do with the seal in question is a point I cannot solve,—there is not even the semblance of a coincidence. How could the Christian Church be sealed out of the twelve tribes of Israel *in the days of Constantine*? What part was taken by the angelic host in this gathering of the real Israel

¹ "Abstract of Lectures," p. 508.

out of the nominal Israel? and what injury fell upon that nominal Church after the elect were gathered? It may possibly be true that mitres and cathedrals are less favourable to the growth of religion than catacombs and caves, and that even a prebendal stall is apt to induce the ease, learned or otherwise, which is said to be inseparable from dignity; but I have yet to learn, how *an apostate Jewish church* could have fallen into this ecclesiastical eccentricity *in the days of Constantine*, or what flour, save flowers of rhetoric, so miserable a drudge could have been made to grind “at Cæsar’s mill, and at Cæsar’s bidding.” Or what again in the name of common sense has this seal to do with the Puseyism¹ of the fourth century? Can any one see in it any allusion, however remote, to the efficacy of the sacrament of baptism?

And, as usual, the period over which this seal extends is accurately defined—from A.D. 324 to A.D. 395. What is the authority for this date? By what argument is it supported? It stands upon the authority of idle assumption. It is based on an argument of sand: and I trust that a time is coming when all such unsupported and imaginary hypotheses shall leave behind them no clearer trace than the same sand affords of the Arab’s path across the wilderness, to-day perhaps impressed by the faint vestiges of his horse’s track, and to-morrow those marks effaced and obliterated by the sweeping simoom of the desert.

It is time to offer a different explanation. It is probable that this sealing of God’s servants *on their foreheads* refers to the miraculous preservation of the Christian Church from the wrath about to fall on the Jewish people. There seems to be an allusion to Ezekiel ix. 4., where an angel is commissioned to go through the city of Jerusalem, and mark upon the forehead of all who should be exempted from the impending slaughter.

“And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark *upon the foreheads* of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: and let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: . . . but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary.”

¹ “What we call Puseyism in the nineteenth century was the predominating religion of the fourth; and this explains the reason of Tractarian sympathy with the fourth century.”—Cumming.

The time of destruction is now near ; the commotion of the elements, and the miraculous phenomena of Nature, accompanied by the terror and dismay of God's enemies, is indicative of this ; the destroying angels have their commission, and stand on the four corners of the earth, ready to execute it. But before the tornado bursts upon the earth—before the hurricane rushes along in its fury, the servants of God must be sealed in their foreheads,—“sealed unto the day of redemption ;” and the four angels, whose province it is to injure the earth, the sea, and the trees, are forbidden to do so till the elect are safe, and the servants of God have received that mark by which they may be known as the people of the Lord.

I shall endeavour to show that the judgments of God did not fall upon the guilty city until the servants of Christ were safe. Our Lord had warned them beforehand of these impending judgments, and had urged their flight from the doomed city.

St. Matt. xxiv. 15.—“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place¹ (whoso *readeth* let him understand) : then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains ; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house ; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes . . . and pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day : . . . Behold I have told you before.”

St. Mark xiii. 14—18.—“When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let him that *readeth* understand), then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains : . . . and pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.”

St. Luke, xxi. 20.—“When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains ; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out ; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.”

¹ This may be considered as a proof of the writing of this Gospel previous to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, was this done?—did they thus escape?

Josephus says, "After the first attack upon the city, many of the most considerable of the Jewish people *forsook it as men do a sinking ship.*"¹

Eusebius.²—"The whole body of the Church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a Divine revelation given to men of approved piety there before the war³, *removed from the city and dwelt in a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella*; here those that believed in Christ having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judæa, the Divine justice for their crimes against Christ and his Apostles finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of those evil-doers from the earth." Theodoret observes, that a report prevailed in his day, stating that when Vespasian and Titus were preparing for their attack on Jerusalem, *the Christians left the city by revelation.*

And it is worthy of observation, that during the siege itself frequent opportunities of escape were afforded. Upon one memorable occasion, Titus relaxed the siege for four days before their third and last wall was taken, thereby affording to such as might be desirous of obtaining it, an opportunity to escape.

The historian tells us, "A resolution was now taken to relax the siege for awhile, and to afford the seditious an interval for consideration, and to see whether the demolishing of their second wall would not make them more compliant."

This interval the Romans spent in paying their legions.

"Thus did the Romans spend four days in bringing subsistence-money to their legions; but, on the fifth day, when no

¹ Bell. Jud. ii. 20.

² Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 5.

³ Was this *Divine Revelation* given to men of approved piety *before the war*.—"The *Revelation* of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass," Rev. i. 1. ? Was it "the more sure word of prophecy" of St. Peter—"We have *also* a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts," 2 Peter, i. 19. ?

signs of peace came from the Jews, Titus began to raise banks, both at the tower of Antonia and at John's monument."¹

Observe, then, frequent opportunities were offered for the Christians to escape. After the first attack upon the city, doubtless many Christians obeyed their Lord's command, and left the city as men do a sinking ship. When the siege had continued some time, before the taking of the third and last wall, opportunities were again offered for escape. There is no mention made of the Christians perishing *en masse* during this memorable siege; on the contrary, there is every reason to believe they were preserved under this terrible calamity.

I call your attention to a circumstance, which I do not adduce as proof by itself, but simply as a confirmation of the statement before us. *The destroying angels were not suffered to hurt the earth, the sea, and the trees, meaning the general aspect of the country, till the Christians were safe.*

I quote a passage from Josephus, which serves to illustrate this:—

“The Romans raised their banks² in twenty-one days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country, that adjoined the city for ninety furlongs round; and truly the very view of the country was a melancholy thing, for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens, were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down; nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judæa, and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, but now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change.”³

It is worthy of notice that these banks are not raised till the last opportunity has been given for escape, and then the restraining power which had prevented the Romans from “hurting the earth, the sea, and trees,” is relaxed; the country becomes a wilderness; all is desolation and ruin; strangers who had seen it in its beauty cannot forbear tears at its lamentable and altered appearance.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 9.

² These banks were made of timber, earth, and stones; they were equal in height to the city walls; their object being to allow the besiegers to fight on equal terms with the besieged.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 1.

"Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city."¹

We are next struck by the precise number of the sealed ones—144,000—12,000 out of each tribe. There is no more necessity for believing that a literal number is here intended, than for believing that the number of the horsemen under the sixth trumpet means literally 200,000,000,—a number which at that time probably equalled, if not exceeded, the population of the entire globe,—or that the 1000 years means literally a 1000 years. Neither is it imperative for us to believe that exactly 12,000 were sealed out of each tribe. Ten of the tribes had then for many years been absent from Palestine; two only, Judah and Benjamin, remained. Yet even in our Lord's time it was usual to speak of Israel as of the twelve tribes: "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The idea presented to us is simply that a precise number, including probably many thousand Jews, were saved from the impending calamity.²

They are said to have been sealed upon their foreheads. We have seen that this is made to refer to the sign of the cross traced upon the forehead at baptism. "The first seed of the apostacy," says Dr. Cumming, "was the universal perversion of the sacrament of baptism; it was called 'the Lord's mark,' 'the illumination,' 'the preservative,' 'the investiture of incorruption,' 'the salvation.'"

Now at the early period when the Apocalypse was written, it does not appear that baptism was ever administered except by complete immersion.

Thus "John was baptising in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there." Thus Paul and Lydia "went out to the *river side*, where prayer was wont to be

¹ Is. i. 7, 8.

² The Jewish Christians amounted at that time to many thousands. At the Pentecost three thousand were added to the church. Soon after we read "the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly." After that "of many thousands (myriads) of Jews which believed." At the time when the Apocalypse was written, the number must have been considerable.

made." Thus Philip and the eunuch went "*both down into the water.*"¹

In a panegyric on the building of churches, addressed to Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, in the fourth century, by Eusebius², he describes the baptismal fonts of sufficient size for the purposes of immersion.

"Here, too, he has placed the symbols of the sacred purification, by providing fountains built opposite the temple (nave), which, by the *abundant effusion of its waters*, affords the means of cleansing to those that proceed to the inner parts of the sanctuary. And this is the first place that receives those that enter, and which presents to those that need the first introduction both a splendid and a convenient station."

So that, even in the times to which this seal is referred by Dr. Cumming, it does not appear that baptism was administered generally, except by complete immersion. No argument, consequently can be drawn against the "perversion of the sacrament of baptism" from the sealing of the elect in their foreheads. It is an evident allusion to Ezek. ix., where the angel is told to "set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for the abominations" done in Jerusalem, whilst the rest are devoted to unsparing slaughter.

It would appear that the 144,000 are not only saved from temporal destruction, but that they are glorified with an everlasting salvation; for the vision represents them as glorified in heaven as well as saved on earth.

In chap. xiv.—The same 144,000 having "his father's name written in their foreheads," are seen standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. They are described as "the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth," Judæa; they are said to be "redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb."

In chap. xv. 2.,—"They that had gotten the victory over

¹ "Τοῦτο λέγει· ὅτι ἡμεῖς μὲν καταβαίνομεν εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ γέμοντες ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ ῥύπον, καὶ ἀναβαίνομεν καρποφοροῦντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τὸν φόβον."—Barnabæ Epist. 11.

"Νεκρὸς ἐν ἁμαρτίαις καταβὰς, ἀναβαίνεις ζωοποιηθεὶς ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ."—Cyril. Hieros. 3.

² Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. x. cap. 4.

the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." The new Jerusalem is tenanted by these risen saints, for "the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and *his name shall be in their foreheads.*"¹ This is the continuous burden of the Apocalypse; it is the gathering together of Christ's saints at his "appearing and his kingdom," and this "gathering" and this "appearing" were "things which must shortly be done." There is to be no delay between the coming of Christ and the gathering of his elect.

"They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, *and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds.*"²

"And *then* shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And *then* shall he send his angels, *and shall gather together his elect from the four winds.*"³

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; *for your redemption draweth nigh.*"⁴

And this is not to be done at some indefinite or some future period, not at the general resurrection of the last day, or at the final judgment of mankind, but at a certain fixed and definite time, and that within the lifetime of the then existing generation.

"Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass till *all* these things be done."⁵ "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape *all these things that shall come to pass*, and to stand before the Son of man."⁶

¹ Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

³ Mark, xiii. 26, 27.

⁶ Mark, xiii. 30.

² Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 27, 28.

⁶ Luke, xxi. 36.

It is a grand and continuous whole, and the key to it is those words of our Lord, I fear but little understood: "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth (the land of Judæa) mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* Now learn a parable of the fig tree, when his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh, so likewise ye, *when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors; verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till ALL these things be fulfilled: heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*"

I need not say how all this is mixed up in a labyrinth of never ending confusion by commentators. Now, part of it is made to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the Day of Judgment. Now, part is expounded of the recent convulsion of European capitals. Now, of the great distress upon the land of Judæa, and wrath upon the people of the Jews. Now, of events which took place A.D. 70. Now, of events which are taking place A.D. 1855. Do you ask for an elucidation of this inexplicable jargon? the answer is—Prophecy has a double meaning, and the predictions which revealed the destruction of Jerusalem are applicable, in their second sense, to the end of the world. Now, if prophecy has a double meaning, it surely would be modest to allow that double meaning to be applied *only* by inspired men, or else we are liable to the charge of making ourselves prophets; and I do not see the difference between assuming for ourselves the gift of prophecy, and pronouncing that a prophecy which has already received its accomplishment, points to a future event yet to come. Besides which, if the prophecies respecting the destruction of Jerusalem have a double meaning, then the prophecies respecting the destruction of Tyre, Babylon, and Nineveh, must have a double meaning

likewise. If the precedent is established in one case, it must be established in all. I do not conceive that the prophecies which relate to the Redeemer of the human race are analogous to prophecies relating to the destruction of cities; for whilst it would only be natural to find Him the subject of prophecy from the beginning, it would be unnatural that the destruction of a particular city should prefigure events to take place at the end of time. Added to this, our Lord's prophecies in the Gospels, respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, are so hedged in by certain fixed limits which restrict their application, that it seems little short of presumption to extend them beyond the period which He has defined. I positively maintain that our Saviour's predictions in Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi., had respect to a definite object, and were confined within the fixed limits of a definite period. I positively maintain that our Lord did not mean to mix up the scenes of the destruction of Jerusalem and the so-called end of the world. That it would have been unworthy of his divine love and intelligence to have conveyed so indistinct an answer to the earnest appeal of his disciples. I unhesitatingly affirm, that of all shallow, weak, and ridiculous arguments, the shallowest and the weakest is that which divides the question of our Lord's disciples to their Master¹ into three separate inquiries, as if "the end of the world," *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος*, and the coming of Christ were distinct and separate events. Happily for our system of interpretation, the Evangelist tells us, in this very chapter, that "the end" should come when the "gospel of the kingdom should be preached as a witness unto all nations. *Then shall the end come;*" and that the coming of Christ should take place *before that generation had passed away*. Happily for us, the same question, *the question respecting the time when all this should happen*, is put to our Lord under similar circumstances of time and place, by St. Mark and St. Luke, and put in a shape in which it is impossible for any ingenuity of man to make three questions of it. "Tell us, *when* shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"² "Master, but *when* shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these

¹ Matt. xxiv. 3.² Mark, xiii. 4.

things shall come to pass?"¹ And the answer in each case is substantially the same as in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

Why all this labour should be taken to fritter away one of the simplest and plainest declarations of Holy Writ is more than I can tell. Do they think we are detracting from the glory of the Saviour because we say He came at the period He said He would come, and to effect the object He said He would effect? Much more do they detract from the Saviour's glory who lead us to believe that his kingdom is not yet set up, but that it will be set up at a coming to this earth of which the Scriptures do not say one word.

Nor is this the only shift to which the supporters of these views have been driven in order to defend their system. Grotius² was obliged to deny the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament, because he could not reconcile the coming of Christ with the end of the world. He affirmed that God *purposely concealed* the knowledge of his will from the Apostles, who were led to expect the end of the world as immediately about to happen; an argument, if correct, utterly subversive of the inspiration of the New Testament; for in that case they must have uttered positive statements respecting the immediate coming of Christ, which proved to be untrue. For my own part, I can safely say I never understood the Scriptures, especially those of the New Testament, until I had studied "The Revelation." I seemed to feel that Scripture "wanted some epitome which should connect its predictions with their final fulfilment with regard to the new dispensation, and thus to present an entire whole to the reader of those and future times." I mixed up, in mysterious confusion, the world and the land of Judæa; the coming of Christ and the day of judgment; the destruction of Jerusalem and the final sentence of mankind. In innumerable instances I was compelled to put forced constructions on passages which had a plain and definite meaning, and to do gross violence to all legitimate principles

¹ Luke, xxi. 7.

² "Accedat quod etiam hanc qualemunque famam, nullo modo durabilem sibi poterant promittere; cum (*Deo de industria suum in hoc consilium celante*) mundi totius exitium, quasi de proximo imminens, opperirentur. Quod et ipsorum et sequentium Christianorum scripta, apertissimum faciunt." — Grotius de Ver. lib. xi. 6.

of interpretation. Of such questions as those of the gathering of the elect, and the first resurrection, I had not the slightest conception. Following the routine of "blind leaders of the blind," I explained the signs which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem of the signs which should precede the end of the world. "Nation rising against nation" was interpreted of modern commotions. "The gospel preached as a witness to all nations," of the labours of missionary societies; "the signs in the sun, moon, and stars," of the tokens of a future advent, and so on, as tens of thousands do at the present moment. But, if I may venture to say so without presumption, "when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me," *as already come*, and to open my eyes to the true meaning of his blessed word, there fell from mine eyes "as it had been scales." I saw the fallacy with which I had been bound; a key was proffered which at once opened the mystical lock; a clue was found which unravelled the mazy labyrinth; the "epitome" so long wanted was at last discovered, and the Scriptures stood forth in new and intelligible light as "an entire whole." That key, that clue, that epitome, was realised in the Apocalypse. Not only did the Scriptures explain the Apocalypse, but the Apocalypse explained the Scriptures. As in some perfect piece of mechanism, the inoperation of one bolt or wheel deranges the whole; so also with this winding up of the mysteries of God. Till understood, it was felt that something was wanting. When understood, it became evident that the word of God was complete.

I say to all, study the Apocalypse—study the Apocalypse not by the Apocalypse, but in connection with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Floods of light and knowledge will burst upon you—you will possess clearer views of revealed truth than you had before—you will possess more exalted views of your divine Lord—you will see Him already come, the footsteps of his awful coming still deeply printed on the Jew and on Jerusalem—you will recognise his mighty and powerful kingdom stretching far away throughout the universe—you will see Him set down with his Father upon his throne, and his kingdom ruling over all. And when the infidel or the sceptic shall ask, as of old, "where is the promise of his coming?" you will point to a world born again under his

sway—you will point to Christianity filling the length and breadth of the earth—you will point to all enemies being gradually subdued under his feet, and heaven and earth re-echoing the triumphant song, “Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

Immediately, *μετὰ ταῦτά*, after the sealing of the 144,000 “of all the tribes of the children of Israel,” defined chap. xiv. 3. as the “redeemed from the earth,” Judæa, St. John beholds “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues.” This innumerable multitude is evidently contrasted with the specific number, the 144,000, as the gathered from “all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues;” i. e., from nations which were not Jews, are put in apposition to the “redeemed from the earth,” Judæa. The Church at that time, it must be remembered, was composed of “devout men out of every nation under heaven.” No land so remote or barbarous but had some candidates for the “white robes,” and the “palms” of victory. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; . . . And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”¹ “Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom (the Jews, compare Matt. xxi. 43.) shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”² It will be noticed, that they who “shall come from the east and west to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God,” (and surely this sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, cannot be referred to the gathering of the Gentiles into the Christian Church,) are said to do so at the time of the rejection of the “children of the kingdom.” So St. Luke xiii. 23—25. 28—30. “Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is

¹ John, xvii. 20—22.

² Matt. viii. 11, 12.

risen up, and hath shut to the door (evidently referring to his coming, Matt. xxv. 10.) . . . There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last." It is, then, only in accordance with the analogy of Scripture, that at "his appearing and his kingdom" "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," should be gathered unto Him, as well as the elect jewels of his own Israel, should enter into his kingdom, and should sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God.

One class of these risen and glorified saints attracts the peculiar notice of St. John : — "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white¹ robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation;" (*Ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης*, out of the tribulation, the great one, the tribulation foretold by our Lord,— "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake,") "therefore are they before the throne of God." They are not removed to such an inconceivable distance from the glory of the Godhead, that through the infinity of space, that glory seems but like the glimmerings of some distant star, but "before the throne of God," and serve Him day and night in his temple, and He that "sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

¹ "Tunc nuntius Domini coronas jussit adferri; allatæ sunt autem coronæ velut ex *palmis* factæ, et coronavit eos viros nuntius . . . *dato eis sigillo*; nam vestem eandem habebant, id est, *candidam sicut nivem*." — Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo, 8.

Oh, what a glorious contrast to the symbols presented in the earlier part of this seal! From scenes of desolation and terror, shadowed forth by the sun black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon as blood, and the stars falling to the earth, from the confusion and dismay attending upon the dissolution of things human and divine—from vainly-uttered shrieks addressed to inanimate Nature to hide the enemies of God from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb—we are caught up to the throne of God, radiant with glory and strength, to the multitude which no man can number, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands—to the 144,000 with his Father's name in their foreheads, standing upon Mount Sion; we hear the echo of their chant of victory, as in strains of deeply flowing and majestic harmony it reverberates along the aisles of eternity—"Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Let us now take a brief review of this seal. Miraculous phenomena indicative of calamity and desolation are the harbingers of the wrath of the Lamb. The enemies of God hide themselves in terror and dismay. Destruction is about to overtake them. But there are servants of Christ in Judæa and in Jerusalem of whom the Lord said, "In your patience possess ye your souls; there shall not an hair of your head perish." These are exempted from the approaching slaughter. 144,000 are sealed in their foreheads. The angel ascending from the East commands the four angels whose province it is to hurt the earth, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

These sealed ones are not only saved from that desolation, but they are represented as glorified in heaven; God not only did not "appoint them to wrath," but to obtain salvation¹

¹ 1 Thess. v. 9. "to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."—That this salvation does not merely mean temporal deliverance from that wrath to which the Jewish nation were appointed, but also heavenly glory, is shown from the consideration, that they who wake, and they who sleep, are equally to be partakers of it.—Compare 1 Thess. iv. 13—18. To this salvation our Lord alludes (Luke, xvii. 30—37.) "Even thus shall it be *in the day when the Son of man is revealed*. . . . *in that night* there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women

through their Lord Jesus Christ, who died for them, *that whether they wake or sleep*, (i. e., whether they should be "alive and remain unto his coming," or whether they should be the "dead in Christ") *should live together with Him*. Christ sends "his angels, and gathers his elect from the four winds." They are seen standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands; they are described, chap. xiv., as "the redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb."

For this deliverance, this "better resurrection," they pour forth the unceasing song of praise: — "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen."

I submit this interpretation as more reasonable than that which, in accordance with a supposed system of chronology, which has no other foundation than the imagination of its advocates, refers the events of the Sixth Seal to the fourth century, — which discovers, under symbols expressive of terror and despair, the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, — which gathers a Christian Church out of the twelve tribes, 300 years after the twelve tribes had been scattered to the winds, — which locates these twelve tribes in the bosom of the Roman empire, — which discovers the Puseyism and Tractarianism of the fourth century in the circumstance of the servants of God being sealed in their foreheads, — to say nothing of the monstrous leap of seventy years during which the real Church is being gathered out of the nominal Church. To me it is a marvel that such statements should be tolerated, and that such books should be so extensively circulated, and it confirms me in the supposition, that either very few ever think of the subject at all, or else follow blindly in the beaten track which others have laid down.

shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body (the Jewish nation) is, thither will the (Roman) eagles be gathered together."

And before I close this Lecture, I desire to express my firm conviction that the Church has not acted well or wisely in practically excluding the Apocalypse from her services. It is by no means improbable that it is mainly owing to the want of enlightened critical study with regard to this book, added to the hesitation with which it has been received, that much of the folly of modern interpreters is to be traced. Now, if the Apocalypse is worthy to occupy a place in the Sacred Canon, it is worthy of being as frequently read as other parts of Holy Scripture ; and if permitted to be read in our churches at all, it ought to be studied by those who minister about holy things. If it is not worthy of such a position, let it be excluded altogether from the rank of canonical books, but let not the Church be placed in the anomalous position of recognising a book as canonical, which she does not read, and of upholding the inspiration of an Apocalypse which she practically rejects.

Now, surely, it does not follow because much that has been said and done on this book is mere guesswork, much negatively ridiculous, if not positively mischievous, much to the disgust of reason and common sense, and, not least of all, much in defiance of the legitimate rules of Scriptural interpretation, that no meaning is ever to be found, no clue ever to be discovered. If it was necessary for the Apocalypse to be written, we may suppose it was necessary for the Apocalypse to be read, and if a special blessing, nowhere else promised to readers of Scripture, was promised to the hearers and readers of the Apocalypse, we may suppose there was some urgent reason for their compliance with the terms of the blessing. My impression is, that the Apocalypse was perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was first addressed, that the symbols with which it abounds were of frequent use amongst the Christians of those days, that the definitions and explanations of these symbols which pervade the book, must have removed all doubts from the minds of those who heard and read them, and that its figures and tropes were not a whit more difficult of comprehension than the allegories of our Lord in the Gospels. If we have lost the key, just as we have lost the knowledge of some sciences with which antiquity was familiar, it is because we do not put ourselves in the situation of those for whom its warnings were written.

It is plain, then, our only chance of understanding this book will be in some measure to realise the position of those to whom the Revelation was sent; to place ourselves in imagination in that land which was immediately to be the theatre of these predictions; to enter into the deep feelings of those to whom the worship of the Beast was an awful reality, and the coming of the Son of Man a present mystery; to stand in the broad street of that Holy City which was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and to see from its lofty walls the myriads of locust armies gathered together for its destruction; to listen to the groans of the famine-stricken people; to see their desolation, only equalled by their impenitence; to let one idea stand prominently forward in our minds, that the Jewish Christian of those days expected the immediate coming of his Lord to destroy his city and nation, and to gather his elect from the four corners of the earth.

To do this effectually, we must perhaps unlearn what we have been accustomed to consider established and certain truth, we must perhaps unteach ourselves what has hitherto rested on a foundation supposed to be unassailable. We must sift and try to the bottom principles of which no doubt has up to this time been entertained, and we must weigh them carefully in the balance of the Sanctuary. But if, by the grace of an all-wise and directing Spirit, we are enabled to arrive at more sure conclusions than those previously formed, our labour will not be lost. The majesty of Scripture, as a grand and unbroken whole, will be asserted. The Apocalypse will be found to utter the same note as the Gospels, and the Gospels will be found confirmed by the Apocalypse. The Epistles will take up the same divine sound, connecting the predictions of our Lord with the nearer announcement of their speedy and immediate accomplishment. Not one link will be wanting. "By the greatness of his power not one faileth."

Added to this we shall gain an insight, such as we may reasonably hope is not at variance with truth, into a sublime and long sealed up portion of Holy Writ—an insight which the first commentators on the Apocalypse had, and which modern theorists have lost sight of. We shall go back, with Andreas and Arethas, to the scenes connected with the destruction of the

Jewish polity, instead of going forward with new-fangled speculators to the so-called end of the world. Following the steps of the earliest commentators, *whose expositions were based upon others which had preceded theirs*, we shall discover that the view taken of these symbols by the early Church, was in all probability the right one; and that the fables with which the religious world is now ringing are the creations of yesterday. In a word, we shall hope to uncover the wrapping which the ignorance of bygone days has rolled around the Apocalypse; proceeding all the while upon the incontrovertible principle, that the Apocalypse is declared by its author to be a prophecy of which the fulfilment should take place immediately, and that if a blessing was promised to the public reader of it¹, and to those who heard him, it must have been intelligible to those who complied with the terms upon which that blessing was to be expected. Surely it does not follow because the biblical student has been led with parched throat and swollen tongue to one mirage after another of hot and glaring sand, each as illusory and as unstable as the preceding, that no oasis of green sward and of limpid streams shall ever give rest to his burning brow and his fainting form. Surely it does not follow that truth is never to be found because it has been for a long time overlaid; or that an interpretation, satisfactory to reasonable minds, shall never be made out, because error has mystified the subject for 1,000 years. Surely it does not follow that a book, once understood, shall never be understood again, or that the light and knowledge of the nineteenth century shall not be able to unravel mysteries which to the first century were easy of comprehension. Nay, may it not be possible, that the time for the unveiling of this secret volume may be at hand; that with a more enlightened and critical study of the Scriptures, the darkness of former ages may disappear? Nay, may not the time have come, in the providence of God, when a deeper insight into the first principles of the doctrine of Christ may lead to still more glorious results than those already accomplished, and a clearer demonstration of eternal truth produce a more real acceptance of vital religion at the hands of the spiritual Israel of God?

Only let us not fear for the truth itself. That will come out

¹ ὁ ἀναγινώσκων. — Rev. i. 3.

unscathed and untouched ; as it cannot be injured by falsehood, so it cannot be propped up by sophistry ; it dreads no assailant, as it needs no apology. Like this glorious book, "not one word of which could be added to or taken from," it derides every attempt at amplification or detraction. We do not commend ourselves a whit nearer to God by magnifying predictions which are defined as relating to particular events (a feeling natural to man, and the latent cause of all hero-worship); neither do we estrange ourselves from his favour by representing things *as they are*, and not as our taste would lead them to be.

LECTURE VII.

THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS AND VIALS.

Rev. viii.

1. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4. And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

FIRST TRUMPET.

7. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

Rev. xv. xvi.

5. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6. And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

FIRST VIAL.

2. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

SECOND TRUMPET.

8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea : and the third part of the sea became blood ;

9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died ; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

THIRD TRUMPET.

10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters ;

11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood ; and the third part of the waters became wormwood ; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

FOURTH TRUMPET.

12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars ; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

SECOND VIAL.

3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man : and every living soul died in the sea.

THIRD VIAL.

4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters ; and they became blood.

5. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy.

7. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

FOURTH VIAL.

8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun ; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

9. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues ; and they repented not to give him glory.

We have already explained six of the Seven Seals.

The 1st, indicative of invasion and conquest.

The 2d, of faction and civil war.

The 3d, of dearth and famine.

The 4th, of wholesale death and pestilence.

The 5th, revealing the impatient cry of the martyrs for vengeance against their murderers.

The 6th, the miraculous phenomena preceding the coming vengeance, the terror occasioned by these prodigies, and the deliverance of the Christian Church from the impending desolation.

One more seal only remains to be broken; for the book written "within and without" is sealed with Seven Seals. This seal must evidently introduce the consummation. This consummation is not revealed all at once, but is protracted over a period during which seven trumpets are sounded, and seven vials are poured out. I am inclined to believe the seven vials are only a repetition of the woes denounced by the seven trumpets—that, as is very common in prophecy, especially where that prophecy is given under symbol and allegory, the symbols are doubled—that the subject of the Seventh Seal, comprising the sounding of seven trumpets, the fall of Babylon, and the coming of Christ, extending to verse 4. of chapter xv., is again resumed with verse 5. of chapter xv., comprising the pouring out of seven vials, which are more or less identical with the seven trumpets, the fall of Babylon, and the coming of Christ. I shall be able to show an extraordinary coincidence between the trumpets and vials—a coincidence so near and close, and so minute in many particulars, that I think it will be impossible to resist the conclusion that they both prefigure the same events. The plan which I shall adopt will be to take the trumpets and the vials together, and, by so doing, we shall obtain great assistance in their elucidation; for it will often be found that where sometimes the trumpet is less full and explicit, the vial is more diffuse; or where the vial is less instructive and complete, the trumpet supplies the deficiency.

One thing is certain: I shall look for no far-fetched, no mystical interpretation. If the symbol be not of simple and easy exposition, I shall take it for granted that owing to the lapse of years, and the scanty historical records of the period, I am destitute of that necessary information which would give the clue at once. I must believe, if the book be of a character such as the author has defined in the preface, viz., "*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God*

gave unto him to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass*," that it was perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was addressed ; I cannot think for a moment if it was "The revelation," The unfolding, The unwrapping, "Αποκαλυψις," that it was necessary to send a key to open the Apocalypse. I cannot think that Christ would have broken the seals of the sealed book, only to leave those to whom its mysteries were revealed wrapped in ten-fold ignorance.

And above all I shall look for no chronological history of the world and of the Church down to the end of time. Of all fatal prejudices to the interpretation of the book, this is the worst, — a prejudice which the declared object of the book ought to have overcome hundreds of years ago, — a prejudice which has not the shadow of an argument to support it, but which, like many old opinions, will perhaps require a more powerful voice than mine to annihilate. What precedent is there in the book of God for a single prophecy to contain a civil and ecclesiastical history of the world for 2000 years? If the book of revelation be such a prophecy, it stands out in conspicuous anomaly. Prophecy was ever given under the old dispensation *through a succession of prophets*, and holy men of old, raised up one after another, uttering their predictions with increasing clearness as the time drew nigh, "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Moreover, prophecy generally, especially prophecies relating to the destruction of particular cities, such as Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, was uttered near the period of its fulfilment. There is nothing in the history of prophecy which answers at all to the monstrous idea that 2000 years before it could take place the Apocalypse should contain a prediction of the burning of Papal Rome by literal fire. Such a chasm between the enunciation of prophecy and its fulfilment would destroy the nature and object of prophecy altogether, for it would cease to have any effect upon those it was intended to influence. Were some one commissioned to foretel that London would be destroyed by volcanic eruption in 2000 years' time, what effect would such a prediction have upon the merchant princes of our day? If they did not call in question the inspiration or the reasonableness of the prophecy, they would regard it as one with which they in their generation were little concerned.

Added to this, prophecy generally, if we except those prophecies relating to the Redeemer which concern all mankind, had a distinct and specific reference to the generations of men *then existing*. The Jews are forewarned of their seventy years' captivity in Babylon. Their future deliverer Cyrus is pointed out to them by name. Their return to their own land, the restoration of their temple, and its second and complete overthrow, are legitimate subjects of prophecy, of deep interest to those who heard them. But the system which is supposed to be the subject of the woes of the Apocalypse had no existence when its destruction is so graphically predicted—the generation of men to whom the Apocalypse was addressed could not have had the remotest idea that papal tyranny was the theme of apocalyptic denunciation. Nay, it is only of comparatively recent date that the amazing discovery has been brought to light that the Apocalypse contains an ecclesiastical history of the world and the Church from the age of St. John down to the end of time, of which the ages that are past never discovered that one syllable applied to them. Nay it is the stupendous Eureka of the 19th century that the Apocalypse is the unique prophecy in the Book of God in which not one soul to whom these communications were made could possibly have been interested, not one word of which could have been intelligible to those to whom they were addressed, and which are only to be understood when viewed in the light of recent investigation. The inspired seer might have said, “Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy *for the time is at hand.*” But if, according to Mr. Elliott’s and Dr. Cumming’s theory, its meaning is only now found out, no reader of the Apocalypse in those days gained for himself the blessing promised. The Giver of these sublime visions might have denounced the most awful sentence upon those who should add to or take away from the words of this prophecy, “I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book;” but if “The End

of Controversy," as Mr. Elliott's book on the Apocalypse has been called, has only now appeared, that sentence has been a dead letter from the day it was spoken until the present time.

Into what mazy labyrinths of inextricable difficulty—and there is yet a heavier charge, into how near an approximation to infidelity—are such views likely to lead thinking minds. In our day, men, clear-headed, common-sense men, meet us at every turn, and they say, and say justly, if the Apocalypse was to be a blessing to those that heard and read it, how is it that its meaning should have lain hid for so many centuries, and should only now be discovered. If Mr. Elliott's and Dr. Cumming's theory be correct, it never has been a blessing to any one until now, for its meaning is only just found out; and it never can be a blessing to any one unless viewed in the light of their system of interpretation. Surely it is high time such notions should be investigated, and the fallacy on which they rest exposed. Surely it is high time that the modern system of apocalyptical interpretation, the popularity of which is a standing disgrace to the biblical knowledge of our generation, should be laid bare; and that credulous minds might know on what slender ground they pin their faith to the blasphemies respecting the battle of Armageddon, and with how little scriptural authority the Valley of Jehosaphat is converted into the trenches of Sebastopol.

And here let me allude to that popular error which lies at the foundation of this chronological interpretation of the Apocalypse: it is supposed that such expressions, "Behold, I come *quickly*," "Things which must *shortly* come to pass," "The time is *at hand*," may be resolved into any indefinite period, because that St. Peter speaking of our Lord's coming, says "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

St. Peter simply means to say, that one day is the same to God as many years, and that to the God of eternity there can be no divisions of time; the common use of the number 1000¹ to denote many, is sufficient proof of this.

¹ "The cattle on a thousand hills;" "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand;" "How should one chase a thousand?" "A thousand shall fall at thy side;" "A little one shall become a thousand;" "They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years;" "But when the thousand years are finished."—See Moses Stuart, *Excursus v. p.* 800.

But that St. Peter did not mean by this expression to put off the coming of the day of God to any indefinite period, is most evident from the whole tenor of the passage. He represents mockers, in the last days, “ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν,” at the last of the days, at the very close of the Jewish dispensation, expressing their astonishment *that Christ had not already come* according to his promise, “and saying, where is the promise of his coming, for since the Fathers fell asleep, — since the martyrdom of the Fathers of the Christian Church,—all things continue as they were,” and there is no symptom of his coming, “*παρουσία?*”

But though this coming was delayed in mercy to those who were not yet gathered, St. Peter leads us to the conclusion that the coming was near at hand.

“The Lord is not slack ‘ὁ βράδυνει’ concerning his promise.”

“The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night.”

“Looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.”

How could the Lord not be slack? How could the day of the Lord come so suddenly? How could the time of his coming be pointed out as the time when some of the Fathers should have been asleep? (Compare Fifth Seal.) How could those whom he addressed be earnestly expecting it, and hastening unto it, if it were postponed to a distance of thousands of years. I do not think I am transgressing the bounds of strict truth, when I make the statement, that there is hardly a single passage referring to the coming of our Lord in the New Testament, in which, either directly or indirectly, some allusion is not made to the speediness of that coming. There are not a few in which it is most positively stated that he would come in the lifetime of the then existing generation. If these views are different in a great degree from those generally entertained, I can only say that truth compels me to make them known. I have no other wish than to elicit truth. Had the same powerful arguments, which can be brought to support these views, been at hand to support the Trinitarian doctrine, the world would never have heard of Faustus Socinus or Dr. Priestley.

But to return. The plan which I shall adopt, and which I

hope to carry out in explaining the Seventh Seal, will be to take the trumpets and vials together, and the events which follow them together. The interpretation must be viewed as a whole, to appreciate its correctness. At the outset, then, before another page has been turned over, let me ask the intelligent reader to propose to his mind this single consideration. An interpretation is about to be offered, purporting to show a perfect identity of meaning, under a variety of language and figure, which serves rather to heighten and enhance than to take away from the symbol, between the trumpets and vials. An explanation is to be found not for one or two of them, but for them all, and this interpretation is not to be extended over a period of 2000 years, or to be resolved into the statement that the trumpets and vials relate to things yet to come, but is to be made out for a limited (a very limited) space of time, the time which elapsed between the banishment to Patmos and the destruction of Jerusalem. The interpretation must not only be simple and natural, but it must be suited to the events of those times and of no other. *If it can be found*, I do not think you will hesitate to adopt it. And one great end will be answered. The book will not be laid aside as a book of unintelligible mysteries. It will be seen that it is only a fuller development of our Lord's predictions, perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was addressed — allegorical and symbolical it is true, but not difficult to be understood by those who had so often heard him explain his symbols and allegories. It is possible that every event touched upon in the Apocalypse had already been the subject of his communication, who, for "forty days, explained to them the things concerning *the kingdom of God*." Many of them correspond with what is already written in the Gospels and Epistles; and had all been written which Jesus *said*, as well as which Jesus *did*, the hyperbole had not been perhaps so overstrained, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." I can see no antecedent impropriety, on the contrary, I can imagine strong and weighty reasons why, *as the time drew near*, this further revelation should have been given to his fainting and persecuted Church.¹

¹ "That great use was made of the Book of the Revelation for the purpose of encouraging and consoling the Christians, as well as for marking the signs of the times during the persecutions, may be gathered from most of the early

I can see no reason why it should have been given *after those times*, except to gratify a prurient imagination, or to lead men into a mazy labyrinth of hypothesis and conjecture.

And before I enter upon this double explanation of the trumpets and vials, I would observe, that this double vision of the same events, especially where they are foreshadowed by symbol and allegory, is very common in Scripture.

Take, for example, Joseph's double dream¹ — the dream of his brethren's sheaves bowing down before his sheaf; and that of the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars making obeisance to him; and the purport of these two dreams being the same, viz. his exaltation over the rest of his family.

Pharaoh's double vision — the vision of the seven kine, and the seven ears of corn, and the reason given for this repetition — "The dream of Pharaoh is *one*: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he *is* about to do. And for that *the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice*, it is because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."²

Gideon's double signs — of the dew on the fleece, and the dew on the ground. "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; *and* if the dew be on the fleece only, and *it be* dry upon all the earth *beside*, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew."³

The double vision recorded in Daniel — the vision of Nebuchadnezzar's great image, chap. iii., and the vision of the four

writers of the Church. A great part of the Shepherd of Hermas is manifestly written in imitation of it. See particularly Visions 3. 4. and Similitude 9. The heretics, moreover, appear to have made the greatest use of the Revelation, and hence to have taken their earthly paradise, Millennium, &c." — Professor Lee, p. 292.

"That many false apocalypses, as those of Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, Elias, and Cerinthus were ascribed to Apostles and Prophets, argues that there was one true apostolic one in great request with the first Christians." — Sir I. Newton.

¹ Gen. xxxvii.

² Gen. xli. 25. 32.

³ Judges, vi. 36, 37. 39.

beasts, chap. vii.; both indicating the four great kingdoms which were to succeed one another, to be swallowed up at last by the universal kingdom of Christ.

The prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zechariah, are full of such visions, not merely twice, but continually repeated, and expressive of the same events. I need scarcely mention in how many of our Lord's allegories¹ or parables the same idea is expressed.

It would be nothing new, especially in prophecy, but only in accordance with the analogy of Scripture, if the visions of the Apocalypse should be repeated, and we should find the judgments of the seven trumpets reiterated under the seven vials. Such a reiteration would show the certainty of the fulfilment of the judgments; because the "thing is doubled;" it is "because the thing is established by God." Such a reiteration would also speak of mercy; the delay would serve to show forth the long-suffering of God, and would serve to warn the Church more effectually of the impending miseries.

Immediately upon the opening of the Seventh Seal, a pause takes place — there is said to be "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."² Dr. Cumming says that this silence in heaven for the space of *about* half an hour (ὡς ἡμιώριον), signifies an interval of rest and peace to the Church for a space of between seventy and eighty years.

The way he arrives at this is very ingenious. "To be able to estimate the length of time contained in an Apocalyptic half-hour, we must bear in mind that all the visions embodied in the Apocalypse, extending from the year 97 to 1800 years and upwards, passed in chorographic procession³

¹ The parable of the householder, Matt. xxi. 33., the same as the parable of the marriage of the king's son, Matt. xxii. 1.; the parable of the lost sheep, Luke xv., the same as the parable of the lost piece of silver, Luke xv.

² This is generally supposed to be an allusion to a ceremony in Jewish worship, of silence for secret prayer, while incense was offered on the golden altar in the sanctuary.—Bloomfield.

³ Dr. Cumming's argument is of this kind: The vision occupied 12 hours; the events represented were to last 1800 years (and upwards); the silence occupied half an hour: then,

12 hours : 1800 years (and upwards) :: $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour : 75 years:

which, except for the "and upwards," is very good arithmetic. And since

before the eyes of John in the course of the Lord's day, that is, in the course of a period of twelve literal hours; that Lord's day was a miniature chronology of the world. If this be as we have stated it, then each hour of the twelve hours constituting the Lord's day, from sunrise to sunset, would be the exponent of 150 years, and half an hour of 75 years, or

the third term should really be "*about* $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour," corresponding errors in the second and third terms might balance each other, and restore the soundness of the proportion. Now, if we are told that a representation of events occupying a definite number of years passed before St. John in chorographic procession in a definite number of hours, it would not be very unreasonable to suppose, that any certain portion of those hours represented an arithmetically proportional number of those years. But are we told so? Have we a right to take for the first and second terms of our sum the spaces of 12 hours and 1800 years? I will pass by the second term with the observation, that, according to Dr. Cumming's own account, the events represented do not extend in chorographic procession from A.D. 97, to A.D. 1800 (and upwards); for he tells us there is a hiatus (*valde defiendus*) of 300 years, (equal to 2 hours), represented by no part of the vision and by no corresponding break. So that, on his own showing, we ought to have—

$$12 \text{ hours} : 1500 \text{ years} :: \frac{1}{2} \text{ hour} : 62 \frac{1}{2} \text{ years.}$$

But as to the first term—12 hours—Did this chorographic vision occupy 12 literal hours? Does St. John say so?

I believe the sole ground for this assumption is to be found in the words, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." And this, which really amounts to no more than a statement that his vision commenced on the Lord's day, is taken for proof that it began at the beginning, and ended at the end of that day. Is not this sufficiently unwarrantable? But moreover, supposing that St. John was in the Spirit for 12 hours, viz. from the beginning to the end of the Lord's day, were those 12 hours occupied with this chorographic procession? St. John tells us that the letters to the seven churches which occupy chapters ii. and iii., were dictated to him; and "*after this*" (chap. iv. 1.) we have various proclamations of angels, singing, and adoration throughout chaps. iv. and v. *before* the opening of the first seal (chap. vi. 1.). Yet Dr. Cumming bases his argument on the assumption that the opening of the first seal, representing the year A.D. 97, was synchronous with the commencement of the Lord's day!! Is it too much to say, that Dr. Cumming is working a sum in the rule of three with three terms, of which the third is indefinite, *about* $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour; the second is assumed in *defiance of himself*; and the first is assumed in *contradiction to St. John*? An unstable foundation surely for an arithmetical interpretation of prophecy. Let me state the problem fairly for him:—

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{some part of 12 hours} \\ \text{or perhaps more} \end{array} \right\} : \left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1500 \text{ years} \\ \text{and upwards} \end{array} \right\} :: \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{about } \frac{1}{2} \\ \text{an hour} \end{array} \right\} : x$$

an "*unknown*" quantity.

thereabouts. If this calculation be *an approximation* to the truth—as we think it is—there will be found recorded in the pages of history a respite, or repose, of 75 years, about the time indicated by that point in the chronology of the Apocalypse at which we have arrived. Accordingly, we find that, from the final triumph of Constantine to the invasion of the empire by Alaric, that is, from A.D. 324 to A.D. 395, there intervened the repose, or rather the suspension of judgment so dramatically embodied in the clause, — ‘there was,’ or, rather, ‘there had been silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.’”

And here I must say a word about that principle of substituting a day for a year, upon which these expositors ground their system.¹ The only argument which is adduced is founded on Ezekiel iv. 1. The prophet is commanded to lie on his left side 390 days, in order to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel—to present a symbol of the punishment which they shall receive, and of the length of time during which it should be administered; for it is expressly said to him, “I have appointed thee each day for a year.” In like manner, he was to lie upon his right side forty days, to symbolise the punishment of Judah for forty years. It must be evident, that *these days are not changed into years—they can only be the representatives of years; for how could the prophet lie on his left side three hundred and ninety years, or upon his right side forty years?* Here is no change of the day into the year; nothing more is intended than that these actions should be symbolical of time. In like manner, the spies who go to spy out the land of Canaan are absent forty days; they return with an evil report, and the Israelites are condemned to wander forty years, each year corresponding to one of the forty days.² Here, as in the preceding case, there is no *change* whatever of the day into the year. The days merely represent years, and the actions done on those days are expressive of the time during which the punishment was to last. I am not aware of any case in the Bible of the change of a day into a year. The seventy weeks of Daniel are so imperfectly understood, that the argument is good for nothing.³

¹ Moses Stuart, *Excursus v.*

² Numbers, xiv. 33.

³ In the original, Dan. ix. 24., שבעים שבועות 70 sevens, or 70 sabbaths, are said to be “determined upon thy people.” And by a reference

Above all, I am not aware of anything which justifies the use of this year-day principle in the Apocalypse, a principle which, if it is to be applied to one portion of time in the Apocalypse, must be applied to all. I know of nothing to make us suppose an Apocalyptic half-hour different from any other half-hour; or to justify the statement, that a Lord's day is a "miniature chronology of the world."

According to this principle, the visions of the Apocalypse did not pass in "chorographic procession" before St. John in the space of twelve literal hours, as Dr. Cumming says; but, on his own showing, they must have occupied a year.

According to this principle, the bodies of the witnesses lying unburied in the street of the city where our Lord was crucified, must have lain there for three-and-half years, instead of three-and-half days—a palpable absurdity; for the climate of Palestine would render such a thing impossible.

According to this principle, the 1000 years of the Millennium must extend over a period of 360,000 years—a period of which Moses Stuart says, "I had almost said I hope it is correctly made out."

According to this principle, the holy city must be trodden under foot 1260 years. "The holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months;" which, if it be referred to the treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles in the ages subsequent upon its destruction, is manifestly untrue, for it has been trodden down for a much longer period.

I hesitate not to say, that this year-day principle is unsupported by a particle of common sense, or scriptural argument. Besides, what right have we to interpret the time designated in the Apocalypse in a different manner from that in which we interpret the time mentioned in all other prophecies? I know not why one solitary case, or, at the most, two (if Dan. ix. 24. should be reckoned), should establish a principle for the interpretation of all prophecy where time is concerned. In Gen.

to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. it will be found that the land lay desolate until she had enjoyed her sabbaths. "To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths, for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath to fulfil threescore and ten years." Upon this principle it is perfectly easy to understand why the period of desolation should be called 70 weeks—i. e. 70 sabbatical years.

vi. 3., God announces that the days of men shall be 120 years before the flood comes upon them. The rule in question (one day for a year) would make a respite for the antediluvians of 43,200 years. In Gen. xv. 13. it is predicted, that Abraham's posterity shall be bondmen in Egypt for 400 years; does this, then, mean 144,000 years? Gen. xli. 1. predicts seven years of plenty, and seven years of famine in Egypt. Can this mean 2520 years to each? Ezekiel threatens forty years' wasting to the Egyptians; Jeremiah, the seventy years' captivity in Babylon; Jonah, the destruction of Nineveh in forty days; and so, with an infinity of other cases; and yet, did any one ever think of any other period of time than that which the literal and obvious sense of the words conveys? According to this principle, our Lord must have been in the tomb three years: Nebuchadnezzar must have been mad and ate grass 2520 years — "discipline enough," says Moses Stuart, "to humble a king even as insolent as he."

You will look in vain throughout the annals of prophecy for a precedent, or for a valid argument to establish so monstrous a system. You will look in vain in the book itself for any kind of argument to justify it. Supposing that the world should not come to an end so speedily as Dr. Cumming asserts, what becomes of his division of a literal Lord's day of twelve hours into periods of 150 years per hour, and his half-hours into 75 years each? It was droll enough to explain the terrible phenomena of the Sixth Seal of the prosperity of the Church in the days of Constantine; to represent Paganism as fleeing from the wrath of the Lamb; to seal the 144,000 Christians out of the twelve tribes in Constantine's day. But to make "the silence in heaven," "*ὡς ἡμῶριον*," somewhere about half an hour — meaning evidently a short pause — signify the rest and repose of the Church for seventy years from the time of Constantine to that of Theodosius, is too ridiculous to need comment. I wonder that it was not explained of the Millennium, which some have actually done. But no, it would not suit the system of chronology. The world must just last long enough to be divided into convenient portions of time, so that Alaric the Goth might be introduced with the sounding of the first trumpet. Not that there would have

been the least difficulty in postponing his coming for another century ; for, from the loose style of such exposition, there could not be any great obstacle to prevent "the silence" lasting for one hundred and seventy instead of seventy years.

What, then, is to be understood by this "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour ?" To my mind, it means simply this, — the Seventh Seal is opened, the last of the seals, for the book is sealed with seven seals. This introduces the consummation — the conclusion — the awful winding-up of God's judgments upon a guilty nation. Before those judgments are denounced, there is a pause in heaven ; this pause expresses the deep sympathy of heaven with the expected sequel, and introduces, with peculiar majesty, the subject about to follow.

And let this pause, this silence in heaven, speak to us of the mercy and the long-suffering of God. God's judgments might have fallen at once, but mercy delays them over a period during which seven trumpets are sounded, and seven vials poured forth ; and not till then comes the vengeance upon guilty Babylon, and the coming of the Son of Man. It is like the pause before the flood, when "the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a-preparing." It is like the pause between Christ's ascension and his coming again to destroy Jerusalem,—a pause of nearly forty years,—during which his witnesses preached "repentance to Israel, and remission of sins." It seems to say, in the very language of the prophet, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim : for I *am* God, and not man." ¹

Before the trumpets sound and the vials are poured forth, it will be necessary to call your attention to the machinery employed. The scene is the temple of God in heaven. The agents employed are "*The seven angels who stand before God.*" There are given to them seven trumpets, indicative of woe, contest, and battle, and seven vials, explained in the book as "The vials

¹ Hosea, xi. 8.

of the wrath of God." The giving of these trumpets and vials is accompanied by the prayers of the saints for vengeance upon their enemies ; and, as an answer to their prayers, this vengeance is cast upon the earth (Judæa).

This will be made evident by comparing the scene which introduces the trumpets, with that which introduces the vials : —

TRUMPETS.

Chap. viii. 2.

"I saw *the seven angels* which stood before God ; and to them were *given seven trumpets.*"

"The *smoke* of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

"And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it *into the earth* : and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."

VIALS.

Chap. xv. 6, 7.

"*The seven angels* came out of the temple." . . . "And one of the four beasts *gave* unto the seven angels *seven golden vials* full of the wrath of God."

"And the temple was filled with *smoke* from the glory of God, and from his power."

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God *upon the earth.*"

It is impossible not to recognise a marked and striking identity.

The *seven angels* who stand before God.

The *seven angels* which came out of the temple.

To them were *given* seven trumpets.

One of the four beasts *gave* unto the seven angels seven golden vials.

The *seven trumpets*, indicative of woe, and contest, and battle.

The *seven vials* "of the *wrath* of God."

The *smoke* of the incense ascending out of the angel's hand.

The temple filled *with smoke* from the glory of God and from his power.

The fire from the censer cast *into the earth*, accompanied by "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake," *i. e.* great and terrible commotions.

The great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."¹

From this minute and striking identity, there is a presumption we have struck the right chord in this interpretation. The opening scene of the trumpets and vials is confessedly similar. But I would have you lay no weight upon this; the identity must be preserved throughout, or else be rejected altogether; and remember the Seventh Seal *is the last seal*, no other seal remains; it is unfolded under seven trumpets, and the vials are expressly called *the seven last plagues*. When the seven angels have sounded, and the seven vials have been poured forth, no other plagues remain; the angels who execute the wrath both of the trumpets and vials, are the "Seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God."

FIRST TRUMPET.

Chap. viii. 7.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

FIRST VIAL.

Chap. xvi. 2.

"And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image."

To bring this identity more conspicuously before you I enclose within parallel lines the chief features of resemblance:—

Trumpet. The *first angel* sounded.

Vial. The *first* poured out his vial.

T. Upon *the earth*. (Judæa.)

V. Upon *the earth*. (Judæa.)

T. There followed hail and fire mingled with blood. (One of the plagues of Egypt.)

V. There fell a noisome and grievous sore. (One of the plagues of Egypt.)

¹ The woes of both trumpets and vials are sent "*upon the earth*," (Judæa,) compare Rev. viii. 13.—where woe is predicted to "*the inhabitants of the earth* by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound."

T. They were cast *upon the earth.* (Judæa.)

V. "Upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshipped his image," defined Rev. xiii. 14. as "*They that dwell on the earth.*" (Judæa.)

The trumpet is explained by Dr. Cumming of the invasion of the Roman provinces by Alaric the Goth, A.D. 396; the first vial of the French Revolution, A.D. 1793.

It is impossible for me to quote all that he has transcribed from Alison and other sources; his description is as beautiful as it needs to be. The only fault I have to find with it is, that, under the trumpet, I can see no mention of Alaric; under the vial, no allusion to republican baptisms and republican marriages. I cannot see how the grievous sore falling upon "the men which had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image" — an evident allusion to those who apostatised from Christianity to heathenism, and worshipped Cæsar's image (the usual test in those days) — can be made to refer to the noyades of Nantes, or to Madame Maillard of the opera. It is all very nice; but it wants two things, proof and probability.

But I hasten to show the identity between the trumpet and the vial: the identity between the first trumpet and vial is less striking than any of the others, but even here there is a resemblance.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast *upon the earth.*"

"The first went and poured out his vial *upon the earth.*"

Hail and fire mingled with blood follows the sounding of the first trumpet: this is an evident allusion to one of the sore plagues of Egypt, when there was "hail and fire mingled with the hail" — *i. e.*, destructive of life — "for the hail smote *both man and beast*, and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field." (Compare "the third part of the trees burnt up, and all the green grass burnt up," with the "hail smiting every herb of the field, and breaking every tree of the field.")

A grievous and noisome sore falling upon the enemies of Christ, described as those who had the mark of the beast, and who worshipped his image¹, follows the pouring out of the

¹ "Καὶ ἐγένετο ἔλκος κακὸν καὶ πονηρὸν εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς ἔχον-

first vial—another evident allusion to the Egyptian plague which precedes the hail, viz. “The boils breaking out with blains upon man and upon beast, so that the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boils.”

So that under the first trumpet and under the first vial the woes are cast *upon the earth*—the Jewish earth—and the effects of both correspond with the plagues sent upon the land of Egypt.

It would be inconsistent with the allegorical character of these trumpets and vials to attempt to prove them literally by specific facts from the history of those times, or it would not be hard to show that Judæa became a wilderness; that a plague more desolating than the plagues of the hail fell upon the Jewish earth, and that the trees and grass were burnt up. There would be no difficulty in demonstrating that a noisome and grievous sore fell upon the enemies of God, and that more died of famine and pestilence than by the Roman swords.

Such a literal explanation of an allegorical symbol is not required; it will be sufficient for our purpose to show that *the basis of each symbol* received its accomplishment in those remarkable days, and any particular incident which serves to establish the minutiae conveyed in the allegory is to be looked upon rather as a confirmation of the principal idea, than direct proof of the symbol itself.

SECOND TRUMPET.

Chap. viii. 8, 9.

“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”

SECOND VIAL.

Chap. xvi. 3.

“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.”

τας τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου, καὶ τοὺς τῇ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ προσκυνούντας.”—Rev. xvi. 2.

These are described as dwelling in the land of Judæa. “Καὶ πλατῆ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς λέγων τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ποιῆσαι εἰκόνα τῷ θηρίῳ.”—Rev. xiii. 14.

This is proof that both trumpets and vials are prophetic of events which were to come upon the same people; for they who “have the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image,” are they “*who dwell upon the earth*” (Judæa).

Here the identity is so remarkable that it must remove all previous doubt.

Trumpet. The second angel sounded.

Vial. The second angel poured out his vial.

T. A burning mountain is cast into the sea.

V. The vial is poured upon the sea.

T. The sea became blood.

V. The sea became as it were the blood of a dead man.

T. The third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died.

V. Every living soul¹ died in the sea.

Dr. Cumming explains the second trumpet of Genseric, who destroyed the maritime power of Rome, A. D. 410 to A. D. 440.

The second vial, of the victories of the Nile, Cape St. Vincent, and Trafalgar.

As usual, there is the same amount of argument for the one as for the other.

Now was there any wrath poured out upon the sea, by which the sea became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea, and the ships were destroyed, during the period which we have assigned as the time when these trumpets and vials must have received their accomplishment.

Josephus tells us of two engagements at sea between the Jews and the Romans. One was at Joppa. The historian says, "There fell a violent wind upon them, called by those that sail there the black north wind; it dashed their ships one against another and against the rocks, *insomuch that the sea*

¹ Here equivalent to a third part of the creatures which had life. Compare "every eye shall see him," meaning a great number, equivalent to "all the tribes of the earth," *πάσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς*. The constant use of the word *πᾶς*, every, in the sense of the Hebrew *לָקוֹל*, meaning a great many, especially by St. John, is known to every scholar. *Μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο· ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα, ἐν ᾗ πάντες οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις ἀκούσονται τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐκορεύσονται.* — John, v. 28.

"*Δεῦτε ἴδετε ἄνθρωπον ὃς εἶπέ μοι πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα.*" — John, iv. 29.

"*Οὐδὲ πᾶν καῦμα.*" — Rev. vii. 16.

"*Καὶ πᾶν κτίσμα ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι πάντας ἤκουσα.*" — Rev. v. 13.

"*Ἐν τῇ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν.*" — Luke, iii. 21.

was bloody a long way, and the maritime parts were full of dead bodies; for the Romans came upon those that were carried to the shore and destroyed them, and the number of the bodies that were thus thrown out of the sea was 4,200.”¹

Another took place on the lake of Gennesareth; that lake on which our Saviour walked, where he stilled the tempest, and around which so many of his wonderful works were done.

We read, “Sometimes the Romans leaped into the ships and slew them; and as for such as were drowning in the sea, they were either killed by darts or caught by the vessels, and *one might see the lake all bloody and full of dead bodies*, for not one of them escaped; as for the shores, they were full of shipwrecks, and of dead bodies, all swelled.” “The number of the slain was 6,500.”²

We need not go to Genseric for an explanation of the trumpet,—we need not mix up our own immortal Nelson with the vial: there is no more reason why it should allude to Trafalgar than to Actium or Lepanto. But in the day and age of the Apocalypse, —

“The third part of the sea became blood.”

“The third part of the ships were destroyed.”

“The sea became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea.”

THIRD TRUMPET.

Chap. viii. 10, 11.

“And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

THIRD VIAL.

Chap. xvi. 4, 5, 6, 7.

“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 9.

² “He then got together all the ships that were upon the lake, which were found to be 230.” — Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 21.

worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

Here again the identity is very conspicuous.

Trumpet. The third angel sounded.

Vial. The third angel poured out his vial.

T. Upon the rivers and fountains of waters.

V. Upon the rivers and fountains of waters.

T. The third part of the waters became wormwood, i. e., too bitter to drink.

V. The rivers and fountains of waters became blood, i. e., unfit to drink.

T. And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

V. Thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.

Is this identity mere accident? Do the trumpet and the vial resemble each other from chance? I answer, do letters thrown heedlessly on the floor form themselves by accident into a beautiful poem? Will the delicate and nicely adjusted machinery of a watch unite and blend in harmonious proportion by mere accident? If such results may be accomplished by accident, we may believe that fortuitous circumstances have produced the coincidence between the trumpets and the vials. They evidently bear the impress of relating to the same events, and this is borne out, not by the identity between a few, but by the identity observable in all.

Dr. Cumming explains the third trumpet of Attila, the scourge of God, marching along the Danube, the Rhine, and the Po, A.D. 450; the vial, of the fearful scenes of bloodshed which took place upon all the great rivers of continental Europe during the late war, A.D. 1800. I never heard that the Austrians, Prussians, or Italians, or any of the continental nations vanquished by Napoleon had "shed the blood of" *saints and prophets, i. e.* Christian martyrs and Jewish seers,—or, that God had punished them for so doing by means of Napoleon's

invasion. One nation only was guilty of that double crime, and upon one nation only did the judgments of God descend. Attila might have crossed and recrossed the Danube; but if this be his only title to the position he is supposed to occupy under this trumpet, the same may be affirmed of Prince Gortschakoff, or of Omar Pacha.

We must see if we cannot find a more intelligible explanation of the symbols at a different date.

Under the trumpet and vial the plagues fall upon "the rivers and fountains of waters:" in the one case they become bitter as wormwood, an evident allusion to the bitter waters of Mara; in the other they become as blood, an allusion to the Nile turned into blood.

The basis of each symbol is sufficiently intelligible, — that Judæa, already smitten by the plagues on earth and sea, should be still further devastated by plagues¹ on her rivers and fountains of waters.

Is there evidence that such was the case at this time? Josephus mentions that, in Vespasian's triumph, there were pictures of "rivers coming out of a large and melancholy desert, and *running down through a land still on fire on every side*, for the Jews related that such a thing they had undergone during the war."² He tells us that "Jordan could not be passed over by reason of the dead bodies that were in it, and because the lake Asphaltitis was also full of dead bodies that were carried down into it by the river."³ He also relates the cunning artifice of a child to obtain water during the siege of Jerusalem.

"There was a boy that, out of the thirst he was in, desired some Roman guards to give him their right hands as a security for his life, and confessed he was very thirsty. The guards commiserated his age and the distress he was in, and gave him their right hands accordingly. So he came down and drank some water, and filled the vessel he had with him with water, and then went off and fled away to his own friends. When

¹ This want of water was much felt during the siege of Gadara: "Their drink was given to them by measure, and they were come to the last degree of thirst;" the Romans could see them running together, and taking their water by measure, which made them throw their javelins thither, and kill a great many. — Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 7.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 7.

reproached for his perfidy, he made this answer, — ‘I have not broken the agreement, for the security I had given me was not in order to my staying with you, but only in order to my coming down safely and taking up some water, both which things I have performed, and so think myself to have been faithful to my engagement.’”¹

In another passage, he tells us that their thirst was so intolerable that *they drunk each other's blood*. “If they discovered food belonging to any one, they seized upon it, swallowed it, *together with their blood also*; and I cannot but think that, had not their destruction prevented it, their barbarity would have made them taste of even the dead bodies themselves.”²

“Thou art righteous, O Lord, because thou hast judged thus, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.”

FOURTH TRUMPET.

Chap. viii. 12.

“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.”

FOURTH VIAL.

Chap. xvi. 8, 9.

“And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.”

Here again the identity is too great to be accidental: the allusion in the trumpet is to the Egyptian plague of darkness

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 6.

² Queen Tomyris, after defeating and taking prisoner Cyrus, ordered his head to be cut off and thrown into a vessel filled with blood, with the words, “Satisfy thyself with the blood thou thirstedst after.”

It is well worthy of observation, that whilst the Jews were in this great distress for want of water, the fountains of Siloam and the springs without the city afforded abundance of water for their enemies. “Those springs that were formerly almost dried up, when they were under your power, since he (Titus) is come, run more plentifully than they did before. Accordingly, you know, that Siloam, as well as all the other springs that were without the city, did so far fail that water was sold by distinct measures, whereas they have now such a great quantity of water for your enemies, as is sufficient, not only for drink both for themselves and their cattle, but for watering their gardens also.” — Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 9.

which may be felt ; in the vial, to the terrible sun-stroke of the East.

Trumpet. The fourth angel sounded.

Vial. The fourth angel poured out his vial.

T. The third part of the sun was smitten.

V. The angel poured out his vial upon the sun.

T. The third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it.

V. Men were scorched with great heat and blasphemed the name of God.

Dr. Cumming explains the fourth trumpet of Odoacer, one of the chiefs of Attila, who extinguished the imperial sun of Rome, and transferred the imperial insignia to Constantinople.

The fourth vial is that imperial sun, Napoleon, called by his own soldiers "the little sun;" and the scorching men with fire, is the rolling fire of musketry and artillery, which he called "his right arm."

I have often heard that Napoleon was a believer in what he called "fate;" but had *le petit caporal* been aware that his course had been laid down in the Apocalypse, he might have exercised a religious instead of a political tyranny over the destinies of the world. Under such a persuasion as that which lately prompted the Autocrat of the North, he would have been invincible. Happily, his mission was not so well known to himself as it is to Dr. Cumming, and he had not sufficient perception to perceive "his right arm" in the unusual heat of the sun's rays.

What better explanation have we to offer? The language of the trumpet and the vial cannot be taken literally. An angel could not pour out his vial on the sun; nor could the third part of the sun, and moon, and stars be darkened. The emblem of the sun, and moon, and stars is commonly used in Scripture to denote kingly power, and it is possible that the governors and rulers of the cities of Judæa may be designated under this symbol. In Isaiah, xxiv. 21., "The kings of the earth upon the earth," i. e., the princes of Palestine, are called "the host of the high ones that are on high;" which accord-

ing to Jewish phraseology is equivalent to the sun, moon, and stars. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth, and they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and after many days shall they be visited; then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously." In Dan. viii. 10., "The little horn waxed great even to the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the host, and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them." Here again "the host of heaven" and "the stars" are put for rulers and princes."

The question arises, were the rulers and princes of Judæa cast down at this time? Was the third part of the sun, and of the moon, and of the stars smitten? It is needless to observe that the minor towns and cities of Judæa shared the fate of Jerusalem. That Gadara, Jotapata, Joppa, Tiberias, Jaricheæ, Gamala, Gischala, Masada, and others were taken, in most cases with tremendous slaughter of their inhabitants. That the historian to whom we are indebted for the confirmation of this prophecy, was himself taken prisoner by the Romans, after having in vain attempted to defend Jotapata against their conquering legions, and that at the period when Vespasian was recalled to Rome, in consequence of Nero's death, no place of any importance in Judæa remained to be subdued except Jerusalem. "And now the war having gone through all the mountainous country, and all the plain country also, those that were at Jerusalem were deprived of the liberty of going out of the city; for as to such as had a mind to desert, they were watched by the zealots; and as to such as were not yet on the side of the Romans, their army kept them in by encompassing the city round about on all sides."¹

Under the vial men were said to be scorched with great heat; I give a remarkable illustration. Josephus says—"It happened, that the Samaritans, who were now destitute of water, *were inflamed with a violent thirst, insomuch that some of them died that very day with heat*, while others of them preferred slavery before such a death as that was, and fled to the Romans."²

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 9.

² Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 7.

But though thus burnt up with thirst, and scorched with heat, and slain by sword, and famine, and pestilence,—death overtaking them under every accumulated form of horror and suffering,—“They blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues, and repented¹ not to give him glory.” No extremity of suffering could induce this repentance; no signs from earth or heaven could make them aware of their coming desolation. Even “when they saw their temple burning, they were not troubled at it; neither did they shed any tears on that account, whilst these emotions were discovered amongst the Romans themselves.”

“And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues, and repented not to give him glory.”

In recapitulating briefly these first four trumpets and vials, I would observe, that they allude, more or less, to the plagues which God at various times brought upon his enemies, especially upon the land of Egypt², and represent them as about to fall upon Judæa and Jerusalem.” That their contents are represented as falling upon similar objects of nature — the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains of waters, and the sun. That, under the first four trumpets, a third part is smitten, meaning a considerable part. Yet these are but the beginnings of sorrows: greater woes than these are about to follow. Men are to gnaw their tongues for pain; to seek death, and death shall flee from them. Blood is to be trodden out of the wine-press *without the city* unto the horse-bridles; Great Babylon is to come into remembrance before God; all the fowls of the heaven are to be gathered together to the supper of the great God, to eat the flesh of kings and captains; for where the “carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together;” and an “angel is heard flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud

¹ Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. iii. — “He (Titus) reflected on the desperate condition these men must be in: nor could he expect that such men could be recovered to sobriety of mind, after they had endured those very sufferings, *for the avoidance whereof it was probable they might have repented.*”

² Deut. xxix. 59.: “The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed Moreover, he will bring upon thee *all the diseases of Egypt* which thou wast afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee.” “According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things.”—Micah, vii. 15.

voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound."

With how much greater reason these trumpets and vials may be interpreted of events between which rolls an interval of many hundred years ; or with how much nearer approximation to truth the desolations denounced upon a particular land may find their accomplishment in the woes and commotions which have fallen upon countries widely remote from each other, we must leave others to judge. Certain it is that neither Alaric, Earl Howe, Genseric, or Lord Nelson were at all aware that the scenes in which they played so conspicuous a part, were the subject of Apocalyptic prediction. Certain it is, that neither Attila, the Duke of Wellington, Odoacer, or Napoleon were in the least enlightened by the prophecies which had gone before respecting them. Now Josephus does say of Alexander, that when Jaddua, the high priest, showed him what was written in the book of Daniel concerning the King of Grecia's conquest of the realm of Persia, he at once saw the correctness of the application, and acknowledged the hand of God ; but were it possible, on that elastic principle called the year-day system, for any common sense and reasonable man to extend that "half-hour," (which in these bustling times is all that can be given to such questions,) into "70 years" of earnest and severe reflection, it is possible he might come to the conclusion that these names and events could have no more place in the Apocalypse, than the noyades of Nantes in the desolations of Judæa, or Madame Maillard in the visions of St. John.

Fie upon such nonsense, and upon those who are silly enough to believe it ! As it may be taken for a settled axiom, that any man who attempts to foretel things to come is either a knave or a fool, so it may be believed that it is not a proof of superlative wisdom to accommodate the prophecy of past ages to present events. One step further, and we ourselves assume the prophetic garb, in such cases, O how truly "a rough garment to deceive." We may be sure that if prophecy were wanting to our superior dispensation, it would have been amply given ; and to go back for the exercise of a gift no longer needed, seems to be a return from Christianity unto Judaism, from the higher privileges of the new and better

covenant into the lower mercies of an imperfect and decaying dispensation.

Such, then, the arguments upon which we build the theory that the Apocalypse has long ago received its accomplishment, and that trumpets and vials are predictive of the same desolating events. Neither let it be said, that the "most pregnant and startling changes in the world's history" hardly meet the grandeur of its expressions; for these expressions are limited by circumstances of time and place, so that whilst fancy or taste would lead us to refer them to the future, criticism and fact confine them to the past; and surely, if our aim be truth, we should be careful how far *taste* is admitted as an ingredient of biblical interpretation.

Besides which, the grandeur of the Apocalyptic symbols is not overstrained. Surely the coming of Christ, the gathering of the elect, and the desolation of the once favoured people, is a theme worthy even of its magnificent descriptions. Take, then, large views of the subject; divest your minds of the idea that we are speaking merely of the destruction of a particular city, or a particular people; such events have often happened in the history of the world. But no, we are speaking of the breaking-up of a dispensation—the close of a religion which for 2000 years was the only religion vouchsafed to man—a religion established by miracle, and by a thousand visible interpositions of Jehovah. The subject before you is the grandest event which has rolled along the stream of time¹, and the evidence of its truth is the Jew as he is at this day—a never-dying witness that his temple, his city, his nation, his religion, have all perished, and have not been restored.

The Jew as he is at this day—the denizen of every land and of every clime—"drinking of the Tiber and the Thames, the Jordan, and the Mississippi,"—a pledge to European and Asiatic, to African and American, that a new and glorious kingdom rose upon the ashes of Judaism.

The Jew as he is to this day—the inveterate enemy and the

¹ "The war which the Jews made with the Romans hath been the greatest of all those, not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner, of those that ever were heard of; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations."—Josephus, Preface to Wars of the Jews.

staunchest champion of Christianity ; its undying adversary, and the imperishable monument of its triumph.

The Jew as he is to this day—the living miracle, the indestructible evidence that “Babylon is fallen, is fallen ;” that the Son of Man has received the kingdom, and that he *must* reign for ever and ever.

Let us take heed, “lest he who spared not the natural branches, spare not us ;” “let us not be high-minded, but fear ;” let us learn the lesson conveyed to us in the history of this extraordinary people, of the “goodness and the severity of God : on them which fell, *severity*, but towards us *goodness*, if we *continue* in his goodness, otherwise we also shall be cut off.”

LECTURE VIII.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET AND VIAL.

REV. ix. 1—12.

1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7. And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

8. And they had hair as the hair

REV. xvi. 10, 11.

10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth of lions*.

9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.

11. And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.

12. One woe is past; *and*, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

We endeavoured, in the preceding lecture, to show the close agreement between the first four Trumpets and Vials. We called attention to the circumstance that the *scenes* which introduced them were confessedly similar;—that they were “*given*” to the same agents;—that these agents were, in either case, “*The seven Angels*, which stood before God;” that previously to their being sounded and poured out by these seven angels, the prayers of the martyrs arose like the “*smoke*” of the incense: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth;”¹ and that, in answer to these prayers, the judgments shadowed forth under both trumpets and vials were sent “*into the earth*” (Judæa);—that the contents of the four first were poured respectively *upon similar objects of nature*;—that each prefigured *analogous scenes of desolation and slaughter*;—and that, under a variety of symbol and imagery, such as would serve to heighten the picture, and increase the interest, the events foreshadowed were substantially the same.

The first Trumpet and the first Vial sent *upon the earth*.

The second Trumpet and the second Vial sent *upon the sea*.

The third Trumpet and the third Vial sent *upon the rivers and fountains of waters*.

The fourth Trumpet and the fourth Vial sent *upon the sun*.

¹ Rev. vi. 10.

But though smitten on earth, and sea, and fountain, and sky, — though Judæa lay a wilderness, and her inhabitants were plagued with noisome sores and pestilence, — though her seas and her lakes ran red with the blood of her mariners, and her shores were strewn with shipwrecks, — though her fountains and rivers, and “springs that ran among her hills,” were dried up, so that men drank blood in their extremity, — though her strongholds were levelled to the dust, and enemies whom she was unable to resist “cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them” — though “men (*οἱ ἄνθρωποι, the men*) were scorched with great heat,” which made them prefer the horrors of Roman slavery before such tortures, — though all nature, convulsed and disorganised around them, told but too plainly of their own desolation and distress — no effect was produced. “They blasphemed the name of God which had power over these plagues, and repented not to give him glory.”

Our present subject is the Fifth Trumpet and the Fifth Vial. This trumpet is usually called the first of the woe trumpets, because of the solemn manner in which the three last trumpets are introduced. “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth¹, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound.”²

The best commentary upon this note of sorrow, after our Lord’s mournful declaration respecting the misery of those times is to be found in the history of one of his witnesses, who for seven years and five months predicted woe to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Josephus³ tells us, that “One Jesus⁴ the son of Ananus, a

¹ It is worthy of observation that the trumpet of the three angels which have yet to sound, is full of woe for “*the inhabitants of the earth*” — *τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* — Judæa. It must therefore be matter of certainty, that the woes of the three angels which have yet to sound cannot relate to events affecting various nations, but only to calamities about to fall on one particular people. We have already seen that *all* the vials were to be poured “upon the earth.”

² Rev. viii. 13.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

⁴ “It is not easy to deny the history of this man. This is not a thing

plebeian and a husbandman, four years before the war began, at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, began on a sudden to cry aloud "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds¹, a voice against Jerusalem and the Holy House, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people." This was his cry as he went about day and night in all the lanes of the city. Hereupon our rulers brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare, yet did he not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but at every stroke of the whip his answer was, Woe, Woe to Jerusalem. Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men. This cry of his was loudest at the festivals, and he continued this ditty for seven years and five months, without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith until the very time that he saw his pre-sage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, Woe, Woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the Holy House; and just as he added at the last, Woe, Woe to myself also, there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately, and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost."

There is a marked similarity of language between the words of this witness and those of our Lord, and his Apostles.

"*Woe, Woe* to the city and to the people."

"*Woe* unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days."²

"A voice against Jerusalem and *the Holy House*."

"Behold your *House* is left unto you desolate."³

about which men might be deceived; so that if there be any thing to which we ought to attend, it is this, which we must acknowledge somewhat extraordinary." — Basnage, *History of the Jews*.

"If this be true, Josephus rightly says, it was in a great measure divine." — Le Clerc.

¹ Observe the Jewish notion respecting the four winds: "He shall gather his elect from the four winds." — Matt. xxiv. 31.

² Matt. xxiv. 19.

³ Matt. xxiii. 38.

“A voice against *the bridegrooms and the brides.*”

“The voice of *the bridegroom and the bride* shall be heard no more in thee.”¹

“A voice against *this whole people.*”

“There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath *upon this people.*”²

Here then we have one of Christ's witnesses “*ceasing not,*” like Stephen, to say of the “holy place” “Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place,”³ and of Jerusalem “There shall not be left one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down.” We need not be surprised that Josephus does not say that this man was a follower of Christ. If Christ himself is hardly mentioned by Josephus, we may well suppose with Dr. Paley that his silence was designed. But this is all the better for our argument; the testimony wrung from him is the testimony of an adversary, and it is sufficient for our purpose to be able to show from the mouth of a Jew, that our Lord's predictions were reiterated at this period.

And let me observe here, that Seals, Trumpets, and Vials are all emblematical of great and terrible calamity. No bright spot of glory and triumph emerges from the general gloom. When hymns of victory are heard, they are not heard on earth. Now, if this book be, as they say, a chronological history of the world for 2000 years, were there no intervals of triumph? no periods of repose? no cessation from woe and slaughter, each progressing in its intensity, till “Blood flows out of the winepress without the city unto the horse bridles,” and “the fowls are gathered to the supper of the great God?” What! was “the silence in heaven for half an hour,” stretched out into the somewhat lengthy duration of *seventy years*, the only respite? Was that elastic period the only lull in the stormy desolations prefigured in the Apocalypse? Surely, if that was all the rest the world and the Church were likely to enjoy, it would have been as well to have extended that “half-hour” beyond the insignificant limits of three parts of a century. What! were no times of rejoicing experienced? were no pæans of victory

¹ Rev. xviii. 23.

² Luke, xxi. 23.

³ Acts, vi. 14.

sung by the Church, except on the astounding occasion of Christianity vanquishing Paganism under the Sixth Seal, when, as if to express the sympathy of creation with so great a triumph, "the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;" and "the kings of the earth called on the mountains and rocks to fall on them," in a manner so felicitously expressive of rejoicing and prosperity? The very fact that from the commencement of this prediction to the end, scenes of bloodshed and desolation are ever prominent, is a sufficient guarantee that it does not relate to the chequered history of 2000 years, but to the particular desolation of a particular time; and that this time is not separated by long periods, but consecutive upon the prediction, is made certain from the circumstance, that the book closes, as it commences, with a statement that the prophecy is immediately about to receive its accomplishment. I cannot look then, as some have done, for three several catastrophes in this book; one ending with the destruction of Jerusalem, another with the destruction of Rome, and a third with the coming of the Son of Man, for the book ends, as it begins, with the unanswerable statement that its contents were of immediate fulfilment. I cannot suppose that a prophecy addressed to the Seven Churches of Asia, "*What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the Seven Churches which are in Asia,*"¹ and ending with a reiteration of the same warning to the same Churches, "*I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches,*"² would concern itself with subjects in which those Churches could not by any possibility be interested. Whatever difficulties exist in the Book of Revelation, the difficulty of reconciling a chronological history of the World and of the Church with the express declaration that the prophecy was of immediate accomplishment, was neither created nor sanctioned by St. John. He doubtless supposed that the symbols of the Apocalypse would receive a contemporaneous fulfilment. He guarded, as far as words may do, subsequent generations against any other conclusion. He evidently believed that Christ would come ere his day had passed away, and that he should tarry till he came. But in our day, it matters little what St. John or the early

¹ Rev. i. 11.² Rev. xxii. 16.

church may have thought, or even what the words of Christ may mean. We have settled the question for them, and have decided that Christ did not mean what he said when he declared that he would come in the lifetime of those who heard his words, and that the Apostles, *after the day of Pentecost*, did not know the purport of their own declarations.

It is plain something is wrong somewhere. Either our taste or the Scripture must be in fault. Either our notion of the mode and manner of that coming is unsound, or else the sacred narrative does not speak distinctly. But what if the Scripture should be more definite in its meaning than is generally supposed? What if the commonly received notion of the second advent at the end of the world should be a doctrine less satisfactorily established than we have been led to believe?¹ What if the expression "the end of the world"² should be found to

¹ The cause of much misapprehension on this point, is an incorrect rendering of the verb of motion, *έρχεται*. It is common for this verb in the present tense to refer to a past transaction. Compare *Ἡλίας μὲν ἔρχεται πρῶτον λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι Ἡλίας ἤδη ἦλθε*. — John, xvii. 11.

So Polycarp, "*Ἐρχεται χρίτης ζώντων καὶ νεχρῶν*," where the annotator observes that it ought to be *ἐλευσεται*. However, the faith and the text of the ancient father are too strong for him.

² The period called "the end of the world" is accurately defined to be the time of the closing scenes of the Mosaic economy. Our Lord said (Luke, xxii. 37.), "The things concerning me have an end." And he defined the period when that end should come, to be within the lifetime of that generation.

"Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars but the end is not yet all these are the BEGINNING of sorrows but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved, and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and THEN shall the end come," (Matt. xxiv. 14.); and that this end was to come at the time of the downfall of Jerusalem and the abolition of the Jewish economy, is made certain, from the words so often repeated by the evangelists, "This generation shall not pass till ALL THESE THINGS BE FULFILLED," (Matt. xxiv. 34.) So our Lord said, "The harvest is the end of the world;" and that, by this expression he meant to designate his own times, may be inferred from his own words: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white ALREADY to harvest." (John, iv. 35.) This also was the view taken of our Lord's words by the Apostles. St. Peter calls the time of the end, "THESE last times," (1 Peter, i. 20.) "There shall come in THE LAST DAYS scoffers for this THEY, — the scoffers of those last times then living, — willingly are ignorant of" (2 Peter, iii. 5.) St. Paul, "THESE last days" (Heb. i. 2.). "Now, once in THE END OF THE WORLD" (Heb. ix. 26.) "In

mean, not some period yet remote, looming nearer or farther in the horizon, according to the peculiar obliquities of mental vision with which each individual may feel disposed to regard it, but a definite and well ascertained consummation, to arrive at the close of the Mosaic economy, and within the lifetime of the then existing generation. Surely such expressions as "THEN shall the END come," "Afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming, THEN THE END,"¹ added to the positive declaration of our Lord, in answer to the question "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world," that THE END SHOULD ARRIVE ERE THAT GENERATION HAD PASSED AWAY, should induce a degree of caution with regard to any ill digested opinions to the contrary. True, there is a difficulty in recon-

the LAST DAYS perilous times shall come for men (then living FROM SUCH TURN AWAY" (2 Tim. iii. 1. 5.) "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom THE ENDS OF THE WORLD ARE COME" (1 Cor. x. 11.) St. John, "Little children, IT IS THE LAST TIME" even so NOW are there many antichrists, whereby we KNOW THAT IT IS THE LAST TIME" (1 John, ii. 18.) St. James, "Ye have heaped treasure for THE LAST DAYS be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord for the coming of the Lord DRAWETH NIGH" (James, v. 8. 8.) St. Jude, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints but, beloved, remember how that they told you there should be mockers in THE LAST TIME, these — (then living) — be they who SEPARATE," &c. (Jude, 14. 19.)

In all these passages there is an incidental allusion conveying the idea that the Apostles spoke of their own times as "the last times," and that they, in their day, expected "the end of all things" was at hand. Indeed, under whatever cognate term that period was spoken of, — whether by the "last days" or "the time of the end" of the prophets of the Old Testament, or "the end," "the end of the world," "the last times," "the last day," "the day of Jesus Christ," "the day of the Lord Jesus;" or at last simply by the unqualified expression, — "THAT day," — that well known day which needed no further definition, — of the New; it is plain that one only time was meant, and that, the closing period of the Jewish dispensation. Compare "Et erit in *novissimis diebus* tradet Dominus oves pascuæ, et caulam et turrin eorum in exitium." 8. Barnab. 16. "Fore uti sub *extimis curriculum* seculi." Tert. Apol. 20. "Ὅς πρὸ αἰῶνων παρὰ πατρὶ ἦν, καὶ ἐν τέλει ἐφάνη." — 8. Ignat. ad Magnesianos, 6.

¹ Εἴτα τὸ τέλος. The difference between *ἔπειτα* and *εἴτα* when applied to time seems to be that *ἔπειτα* is used to designate an intermediate space of time between a preceding and a subsequent action. Compare *ἔπειτα μετὰ τῇ τρία*. Gal. i. 18. *εἴτα*, on the contrary, refers to something immediately about to follow. Compare John, xiii. 5.; xix. 27.; xx. 27.

ciling the idea of the end of all things with the close of the Mosaic economy, and it is a convenient way of getting rid of this difficulty to resolve all into futurity, or to take the liberty of supposing the predictions of our Lord to be again prophetic of future events. But it is also plain that neither our Lord nor his Apostles referred these things to future events,—that they had no clear perception of those homogeneous sets of predictions which some have discerned in the Gospels, but that they believed and taught that their own day was the period of the consummation, and that the “end of all things was at hand.” Surely it is not for us to deny their teaching, because we conceive the phraseology in which the events of those days are described to be too magnificent for the events themselves; neither, again, is it for us to limit those events, some of which were plainly supernatural, to scenes of which flesh and blood alone were cognisant. Surely we have no right to assume that inspired men were ignorant of the nature of the truths which they delivered; neither are we justified in placing our own opinion, or what *we think* the Scriptures ought to mean, against the written word.

Say that St. Paul was deceived when he supposed that the “*time was short*,”—that St. Peter, as on a previous occasion, knew not what he said in declaring “*that the end of all things is at hand*,”—that St. John was mistaken in the conclusion which the many antichrists of his day led him to form. “*Now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time*,”—that St. James fell short of the truth in stating “The coming of the Lord *draweth nigh*,”—that St. Jude utterly misconceived the orthodox notion of the end of the world when he pointed out the “mockers of *the last time*” as living in his day,¹—that the Hebrew Christians who “*SAW the day approaching*,”² heard but the “first strokes on the anvil of destiny;”—yet still how shall we say that He was deceived who said “*THEN shall THE END come*,”—“He that shall endure unto THE END, the same shall be saved,”—“Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till ALL THESE THINGS BE FULFILLED!”³

¹ Jude, 19.

² Heb. x 25.

³ Matt. xxiv. 13, 14. 24.

According to the system which I have hitherto adopted, I proceed to bring before your notice the principal features of identity in the Trumpet and Vial under consideration.

Trumpet. The fifth angel sounded.

Vial. The fifth angel poured out his vial.

T. Locusts are sent "upon the earth"—Judæa.

V. Upon "the seat of the Beast"—Judæa.¹

T. The sun and the air are darkened.

V. The Beast's "kingdom was full of darkness."

T. They hurt "those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

V. They hurt those who "repented not of their deeds." (Compare Rev. ix. 20, 21.)

T. Their torment "as the torment of a scorpion when it striketh a man."

V. "They gnaw their tongues for pain."

T. Men seek death and desire to die.

V. They blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and of their sores.

The resemblance is as close as the variety of metaphor and figure will allow, and this variety only such as to increase the interest and to deepen the picture, without leading us to believe that the Trumpets and the Vials relate to different events,—the only material difference being, as is very common in the

¹ Judæa is here called "the seat or throne of the Beast,"—ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον τοῦ θηρίου, i. e. a seat or throne upheld by Rome. So Pergamos (Rev. ii. 13.), is called "Satan's seat,"—ὅπου ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ, i. e. a seat or throne upheld by Satan. Hence it is said, (Rev. xiii. 2.) "The dragon gave him (the beast or Rome) his power and his seat, καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ, and great authority." Hence "the dwellers upon the earth." οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, the people of Judæa, are said to worship him—the Beast. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him." (Rev. xiii. 8.) "And causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein, i. e. the people of Judæa, to worship the first beast" (Rev. xiii. 12.). This explains the circumstance that Judæa is called "The seat or throne of the Beast,"—the "kingdom" of the Beast. Hence Jerusalem is represented as a "woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast"—Rome. (Rev. xvii. 3.) "I will show the mystery of the woman (Jerusalem), and of the Beast (Rome) that carrieth her."—Rev. xvii. 7.

Apocalypse, that under the Trumpet there is a more detailed description of the locust armies, whilst only the effect of their terrible visitation is given under the Vial.

Dr. Cumming, following Mr. Elliott, says, that the star falling from heaven to earth was Mahomet—that the smoke was Mahometanism—the locusts, the Saracens, who swarmed in hordes like locusts—the crowns upon their heads, turbans—the shapes of the locusts like unto horses, because their strength lay in their cavalry—the power in their tails, the horse-tail standards of the Saracens. I cannot forbear giving Dr. Cumming's own words. "The allusion to tails is thus explained; in one of the earlier battles of the Saracens, the standard was lost; their leader instantly cut off his horse's tail, placed it upon a pole, and told his troops that must be their standard when they marched to battle;" hence, a pacha of one, two, or three tails, denoting his authority.

"The five months, during which the locusts hurt men, are the 150 years of Saracenic dominion. The date of the trumpet is from A.D. 612 to A.D. 762."

Under the Vial. The beast is the Pope; the kingdom of the beast, Papal Rome; the "darkness" upon his kingdom, when they "gnawed their tongues for pain," the capture of the Pope by Napoleon and his marshals, his taking the ring from the Pope's finger, marching him into Paris, placing the crown on his own head, while the Pope stood by to gild the scene, but not to perform the ceremony, A.D. 1800—1810.

I cannot think the Christians of the day and age of the Apocalypse would be much interested in this barbarous mutilation of the poor horse's tail, or even in the capture by Napoleon of His Holiness the Pope. I suppose the ring must have been pulled off his finger with great violence, or surely he would not have "gnawed his tongue for pain;" and how five months is to be converted into 150 years of Mahometan desolation passes my understanding. Besides which these locusts are to hurt "only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads," and they who *are* "sealed in their foreheads" are said (ch. vii. 4.) to be sealed "of all the tribes of the children of Israel,"¹ and these are defined to be "*the redeemed from the earth*"—Judæa.² So under the Trumpet,

¹ Rev. xiv. 3.

² Ibid.

locusts are to come "upon the earth" (Judæa), to hurt not "the grass of the earth," but "only the men which have *not* the seal of God on their foreheads." The conclusion is inevitable, *they who are not sealed must be of the same people as they who are sealed, i. e., the people of Judæa.* If "the earth" must mean the Jewish earth in one case, for the 144,000 sealed from the twelve tribes are "*redeemed from the earth,*"—Judæa—upon what principle of legitimate interpretation can it be made to signify in another passage the Roman earth—*οικουμένη*? Or if, on Dr. Cumming's own showing, the sealing of the 144,000 in their foreheads represents the "gathering of the true Church out of the visible Church in the days of Constantine," how can the men who are "*not* sealed in their foreheads" represent the nations of the Roman earth overrun by Mahomet? The passages in question evidently relate to the same people, and yet the one is made to take place A.D. 300, the other, A. D. 800. To be consistent in his principle of interpretation he must make out, not only that Mahomet made an irruption into Judæa with his swarms of Saracens upon the men "which had *not* the seal of God in their foreheads," but that 500 years before Mahomet existed he made a similar irruption into the same land, whilst the 144,000 who *were* sealed in their foreheads were gathered out of the nominal into the real Church in the days of Constantine.

Alas for the fallacy of a chronological system of Apocalyptic interpretation! Alas for its defenders! Truth is too hard for conjecture, and laughs to scorn the unreasonable and the unscriptural idea that Mahomet and his Saracens could have found a place in a prophecy of events so near at hand, that St. John is told to leave his prophecy unsealed. Let them say if they can, why the notion of Mahomet should have even entered into the mind of St. John. Let them define the connection existing between the persecuted Christians of these days and the irruptions of the Moslem. Let them account for the circumstance that all this fanciful allusion to Mahometanism so suddenly ceases in the Apocalypse, although Mahometanism prevails to this day in the Churches to which St. John wrote. If "Jesus sent his angel to testify these things *in the Churches*"—the seven Churches of Asia, long since perished,—One would

have thought, if Mahometanism were deemed worthy of a place in this prophecy, that subsequent notice would have been taken of it, especially as Mahometanism and not Romanism occupies the ancient seat of Christianity. But no—it is more suited to the taste of the day to impugn the Breviary than the Koran, and more in fashion with the popular outcry of an uncharitable faction, to suppose the Pope to be the subject of Apocalyptic denunciation than the impostor of Mecca.

It remains for us to see if we cannot find a more reasonable explanation of this trumpet and vial.

Under the trumpet, “a star falls from heaven to earth.” That a literal star is not intended is very clear; “for unto him is given the key of the bottomless pit.” Besides which, this star is called, ver. 11, “the king” of these locusts, “the angel of the bottomless pit whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue Apollyon;” the words both mean “a destroyer.”

This angel of the bottomless pit — this star from heaven — this king of these locusts, I have no doubt refers to the generalissimo of the Roman armies. Singularly enough in the Sibylline oracles, Vespasian is called “the destroyer of the pious,” *εὐσεβέων ὀλετήρ*. And of his successor Titus, it is said by Josephus¹, “When the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any had there remained any other such work to be done,) *Cæsar now gave orders that they should demolish the entire city and temple.* It was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundations, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.”

Here, then, at the period which we have assigned for the writing of this book, a chief appears on the scene of this spiritual drama, who in every way answers to the description given of him: he is the prince of a great and mighty army, who execute the vengeance of God against the men who “have not the seal of God in their foreheads,” and he answers completely to the name of “Abaddon” or “Apollyon,” — *ὀλετήρ*, — a destroyer.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 1.

We must now pass on to the armies under his command. Observe, first, *their great number*. Under the trumpet this number is symbolised by the figure of locusts swarming out of the pit in such numbers as to darken the sun and the air. "And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were *darkened* by reason of the smoke of the pit, and there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." Under the vial, "the kingdom of the beast was full of *darkness*."

This is emblematical of the number of the Roman armies¹ which then desolated Judæa and Jerusalem. Our Lord seems to allude to this when he says, "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."²

Josephus³ gives us an account of their number: "Titus came suddenly to Ptolemais, and there finding his father, together with the two legions, the fifth and tenth, which were the most eminent legions of all, he joined them to that fifteenth legion which was with his father; eighteen cohorts followed these legions; there came also five cohorts from Cæsarea with one troop of horsemen, and five other troops of horsemen from Syria."

¹ Locusts come in such immense swarms in the East, that they literally darken the sun and the air; no human power can arrest their progress; cannon are employed against them, but in vain; wherever they light, in a moment every green thing, even to the bark of trees, is destroyed. — See Kohl's Russia.

"The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them." — Joel, ii. 3.

"In Joel, i. 4. an army of locusts is mentioned; this is explained verse 6. to mean a nation. 'For a nation is come up upon my land, strong and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and she hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.' In verse 15. we have the day of the Lord introduced, and said to be at hand. A fire is to consume before them. Their appearance, as in the Apocalypse, is the appearance of horses; their noise is like that of chariots, and themselves as a people set in battle array; the earth shall quake before them; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars withdraw their shining; the Lord shall utter his voice before his army (in the Apocalypse the angels sound their trumpets), 'for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?' Joel and St. John describe this army as having the teeth of a lion, Daniel, as having teeth of iron." — Professor Lee on Prophecy.

² Luke, xxi. 20.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 4.

Mention is also made of another legion¹, the twelfth, which is not spoken of in the first account. "He had with him those three legions that had accompanied his father when he laid Judæa waste, together with that twelfth legion which had formerly been beaten with Cestius, which legion, as it was otherwise remarkable for its valour, so did it march on now with greater alacrity to avenge themselves on the Jews, as remembering what they had formerly suffered of them."

Tacitus² confirms this account. "Titus was received in Judæa by three legions — the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth, who were Vespasian's old soldiers. Syria also afforded him the twelfth, and Alexandria soldiers out of the twenty-second and twenty-third legions."

It is a confirmation, and a powerful one, of the view which explains the Trumpet and Vial of the invasion of Judæa by the locust armies of imperial Rome, that in the Book of Hermas to which we have before alluded, "fiery locusts" are seen to proceed out of the mouth of the Beast, or Rome.

"Behold I see a great Beast, like a whale, and out of its mouth *fiery locusts* went forth. This beast came out so fiercely, *as if it could demolish the city at a blow*. . . This Beast is *the emblem of the wrath about to come*." ³

If we take into consideration the circumstance that these locusts proceed out of the mouth of the Beast, or Rome, — the extraordinary point of identity between the "*fiery locusts*," and "the smoke out of the pit, *as the smoke of a great furnace*," from

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 1.

² "Tres eum in Judæa legiones, quinta et decima, et quinta decima vetus Vespasiani miles excepere. Tradidit et Syria duodecimam, et adductos Alexandria duo et vicesimanos tertianosque." — Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. 1. The number of men in a legion varied considerably at different periods of the Roman history — probably now it was somewhere about 10,000; so that the Roman armies alone would be somewhere about 50,000 men. If this should seem too small a number to be compared to locusts darkening the sun and the air, we must remember that a small number of men was called an army in those days. Compare Acts, xxiii. 27. "Then came I with an army and rescued him;" that army was composed of two centurions, two hundred foot soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen.

³ Ecce video bestiam magnam veluti cetum, et ex ore ejus locustæ igneæ procedebant . . . sic autem veniebat bestia illa ita ut posset in ictu civitatem delere . . . bestia hæc est figura pressuræ superventuræ." — Hermæ Pastor. Visio, 4.

which, in the Apocalypse, these locusts are said to spring,—the object of their inroad “*to destroy the city at a blow*,” added to the explanation of the symbol given in the Book itself — “*this Beast is the emblem of the wrath which is about to come*,” — it will be difficult to come to any other conclusion than that to which we have arrived, which refers this symbol to the invasion of Judæa by the locust armies of Rome. This confirmation of our position by Hermas, I conceive to be of the greatest value. It shows how Christians of these days regarded these symbols; it proves to demonstration that they saw nothing whatever of future inroads of Saracens, or of the tail-less phenomena which accompanied them; that it is more than questionable if they even knew what a Pacha meant; and that their ideas of the Grand Turk, or of Napoleon, were about as clear as their conceptions of the Pope or of Luther. It shows that their heads were not stuffed with the nonsense of, what ought to be, wiser days; but that they found locusts, and those, too, “*fiery locusts*,” proceeding in their own times out of the mouth of the Roman power, to “*destroy the city*,” which was once the favoured city of God.

Let us next turn our thoughts to *the particular kind of desolation* which these locust armies of Rome should cause.

“And it was commanded to these locusts that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.”

The meaning of this is very simple. That the effects of their invasion should not be like those of natural locusts, who would prey upon the grass, the green things, and the trees; but they are God’s executioners to punish men, especially those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

How analogous is all this to the words of Christ. “He shall send forth *his armies*, and destroy those murderers, and burn up their city.” Jews and Romans seem alike to have understood that the Romans were the ministers of God’s vengeance.

“*It is God*,” said Josephus, “who is bringing on this fire, to pluck up this city, which is full of your pollutions.”¹

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 2

"We have certainly had God," said Titus to his soldiers, *"for our assistant in this war ; for what could the hand of man or engines do against these towers ?"*¹

Observe next the peculiar torment inflicted by those locusts, the Roman armies.

"To them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months, and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." "And they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and of their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

This seems to me to refer to the shutting up of the whole Jewish people within the walls of their principal city, and tormenting them by the pressure of terrible famine. Hence they are said "not to kill them, but to torment them, five months." The effect of the scourge of the natural locust would be to produce famine, and such was particularly the effect of these human locusts, the Roman armies.

I could fill a volume with proof. "Now, of those which *perished by famine* in the city," says Josephus, "the number was prodigious, *and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable* ; for if so much as the shadow of any kind of food did anywhere appear, a war was commenced presently, and the dearest friends fell a-fighting one with another about it, snatching from each other the most miserable supports of life, nor would men believe that those who were dying had no food, but they searched them while they were expiring, lest they should have concealed food in their bosoms and counterfeited dying.

"Their hunger was so intolerable that it obliged them to chew everything, whilst they gathered things such as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them ; nor did they at length abstain from girdles and shoes, and the very leather which belonged to their shields they pulled off and gnawed."¹

"So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews : then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 3.

people by whole houses and families ; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. The children, also, and the young men wandered about the market-places like shadows, — all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead, wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it, and those that were hearty and well were deterred from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies, for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before that fatal hour was come. Nor was there any lamentation made under those calamities ; nor were heard any mournful complaints ; but the famine confounded all natural passions ; for those who were just going to die looked upon those that were gone to their rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths.”¹

It is impossible for language to convey the pressure of that terrible period in terms more forcible than those of this magnificent, yet awful, description. As a picture of intense suffering, it is worthy of a place beside the well-known delineation of the plague at Athens, or any other scene of acute misery ever drawn by poet, painter, or historian. But no description can come up to the stern reality. There is no corresponding desolation to be met with in the history of man. Like the deluge, it is an unique event, without parallel, and the Lord of life has told us that the stroke of its deep affliction shall never again be repeated. Perhaps the weight of the blow will be best calculated by its effects, and it is a well-known historical fact that from that blow the Jewish nation has never rallied. It struck down, at once and for ever, a whole nation suddenly and miraculously penned up within the walls of its own capital ; and the domes of their temple and their palaces became their sepulchre. Its abiding and penetrating influence has descended through countless generations to the present day ; and the Jew of the 19th century is the living witness that the vengeance which closed his nationality, perhaps for ever, proceeded from an Almighty hand.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 12.

We do not feel surprised that under such intolerable distress they should have coveted death. "And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

Was such their actual condition? I quote almost the very words of the Apocalypse from Josephus: "So those that were thus distressed by the famine *were very desirous to die, and those that were already dead were esteemed happy.*"¹

"But for those that *intreated* them (the robbers) *to lend them their right hand, and their sword to dispatch them*, they were too proud to grant their request, and left them to be consumed by the famine."²

"Nay, the terror was so very great, that he who survived called *them that were first dead happy, as being at rest already*; as did those that were under torture in the prisons declare, that those that lay unburied were the happiest."³

It is particularly worthy of notice that the time over which the power of these locust armies extended was to be "*five months.*"

"And to them it was given that they should not kill them (*i. e.* the men who had not the seal of God on their foreheads), but that they should be tormented five months," "and their power was to hurt men—*the men*—five months."

Moses Stuart observes on this passage, "The usual time of locusts is from May to September inclusively five months; here the natural traits of the locust history are preserved."⁴ I prefer to consider the words as prophetic of the exact period of time during which Jerusalem was besieged by the Roman armies, when the ravages of famine, such as would be the natural effects of a plague of locusts, were most severely felt. Now it is not

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 3.

² Ibid. lib. v. cap. 12.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 6.

⁴ Had the number employed been some number used constantly in the Bible indefinitely, such as the number ten: "Ye shall have tribulation ten days;" "A dragon having ten horns;" "The ten horns are ten kings;" "Ten men shall take hold of a man that is a Jew;" "He hath charged my wages ten times;" "The Jews came and said to us ten times;" it would be easy to show that the five months meant simply a short time; but it would not be safe to employ it in this manner without precedent.

a little remarkable that this was the precise period of the shutting up of Jerusalem by the locust armies of Rome¹, and as the corn which had been previously stored up, was burnt by the factions within the city, the period of the torment of the famine would correspond precisely with the five months here mentioned. To this it may be added, that the command given to these human locusts, not to "hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God on their foreheads," agrees well with the notion of famine, such as would naturally accompany a visitation of these desolating marauders, and that the express charge that "*they should not kill them*, but that they should be tormented five months," prefigures consistently the far greater destruction caused by that terrible visitant than by the Roman swords.

We have next under the trumpet a description of these locust warriors of Rome.

"The shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle." "The sound of their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle."

This is of very simple interpretation. A great part of the Roman army was composed of cavalry. The Jews had no cavalry; from the earliest times of their history they were deficient in that arm of warfare. Rabshakeh, in the days of the Assyrian invasion, reproaches them for trusting to Egypt "for chariots and for horsemen;" he offers Hezekiah 2000 horses if he on his part should be "able to set riders upon them."² They appear to have been as deficient in cavalry in the days of the Roman as in the days of the Assyrian invasion.³

Josephus says, "The Jews were unskilful in war, but they were to fight with those who were skilful therein; they were

¹ Archdeacon Wilkins says in his *History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*, p. 165., "The siege lasted about five months, computing from the 14th of April to the 8th of September."

² 2 Kings, xviii. 23.

³ "Ebutius tried to draw us down into the plain as greatly depending upon his horsemen, but we would not come down."—Life of Flavius Josephus, 24.

"And when it came afterwards to a battle in the plain against the horsemen, and we had undergone the dangers of it courageously for a long time, we were beaten."—Life of Flavius Josephus, 71.

footmen to fight with *horsemen* ;” “ so they were obliged to give way to the attacks of the *horsemen*.”¹

Titus exhorted his soldiers upon another occasion to remember the advantage which they, as horsemen, would have over the foot soldiers of the Jews. “ Consider further,” he said, “ that you have a conflict with men in effect unarmed, while you are well armed,—*with footmen, while you are horsemen*.” These Roman horsemen would be objects of great terror to the Jews. The vision, therefore, fixes upon the horsemen as the principal causes of alarm. “ The shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for battle,” and “ the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.”

They are said to have “ on their heads *crowns like gold*, and their breastplates as it were *breastplates of iron*.”

“ The footmen are armed,” says Josephus, “ *with breastplates and head pieces* ;” “ the horsemen have also *head pieces and breastplates* like the foot soldiers.”²

The glitter of these shining helmets, these “ crowns like gold,” and these iron breastplates, appears to have been very splendid. On one occasion Titus reviewed his army before Jerusalem, “ and his soldiers opened the cases wherein their arms lay covered, and marched with their *breastplates* on ;” he adds, that the glittering of their arms “ shone splendidly for a long way,” and that the walls and houses of the city were crowded with spectators, admiring their gorgeous appearance.³

They are further said to have “ *faces as the faces of men, and hair as the hair of women*.” There is no difficulty here ; the locusts of the vision were to be human beings, not locusts ; consequently their faces are described “ *as the faces of men*.” This is confirmed by a reference to the prophet Joel, where the locusts are said to be men and not locusts. Their hair is particularly mentioned as “ *the hair of women*.”⁴ I believe there

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 2.

² Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 5.

³ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 9.

⁴ As to the locusts there is no question that they represent men : the only question is, what men they are intended to represent. In the highly figurative description of them, the remarkable feature of their having “ hair as the hair of women,” is too prominent to be overlooked ; and it seems probable that it may have been introduced for the purpose of intimating that, notwith-

is greater evidence to show that the Romans wore their hair short than long at this period ; but there is not the slightest necessity to refer the passage to the length, or quality, or to the quantity of hair : the object of the passage is to show that the locusts were not natural locusts, but men. And “ *their teeth as the teeth of lions,*” destructive of every thing ; the lion, the king of the beasts, the Roman, the king of men ; the habitable world under their dominion. In the terse and powerful language of king Agrippa, when endeavouring to dissuade the Jews from going to war with the Romans, “the Roman possessions are not inferior to the Romans themselves.”

To recapitulate. At the precise date and period which we have laid down as the date of the Apocalypse, and within which all the prophetic visions of the book must receive their accomplishment,—at this particular time, when, as our Lord said, Jerusalem should be “compassed with armies,”—the locust warriors of mighty Rome rush forth out of the abyss. Their numbers are so great that “the sun and air are darkened,” and “the kingdom of the beast is full of darkness.” They are described as “horses prepared for battle,” for their cavalry is the principal cause of terror to their Jewish enemies. Their helmets glitter like “crowns of gold,” and their “breast-plates of iron” present a gorgeous appearance. Their “faces as the faces of men,” and “their hair as the hair of women,” show that these human locusts would not prey upon the grass of the earth, or on the trees, but on the “men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” Like the scorpions¹ of the land, they have power to inflict terrible pangs, and these pangs are occasioned by the famine which they produce. Men “gnaw their tongues for pain,” and “their shields for food,” under this agonising torment, and the period of this torment is the five months during which “Jerusalem is compassed about with

standing the fierceness of their aspect, they were effeminate as well as cruel and destructive. The qualities are by no means incompatible. The description which St. Paul gives in his 1st chapter of the Romans of the extreme corruption of manners in that people, makes it strictly applicable to them ; and we know from other sources that that description, frightful and disgusting as it is, is not in the slightest degree exaggerated.

¹ *I. e.* land scorpions, plentiful in Palestine : “Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and *scorpions.*”

armies, and her enemies keep her in on every side." Then was "affliction such as was not from the beginning of the world;" then "men sought for death, and did not find it, and desired to die, and death fled from them." Then "those that were already dead were esteemed happy, as being at rest already." Then did "those under torture in the prisons declare that those that lay unburied were the happiest." And the king who leads on this avenging host—"the angel of the bottomless pit,"—the "star¹ which fell from heaven to earth,"—whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon—so closely realises his title of a *Destroyer*, that he does not "leave in the city and temple one stone upon another which is not thrown down," and in Jerusalem one "human being to slay or to plunder."

I feel I am not mistaken in the general features of this exposition. I seem to have that confidence which a view of the truth alone inspires, that I am not leading others astray by fanciful interpretations, and that I myself am not wandering in the region of romance and conjecture. It is very possible that I have erred, and yet may err, in the minor particulars of this interpretation, but on the great and essential points I have that persuasion and conviction of truth which seldom deceives.

I dare not say this Trumpet begins with A.D. 612 and ends with A.D. 762. I shrink from arbitrarily assigning the date of A.D. 1800 to the Vial. I look with fear and trembling upon such unauthorised assumptions, and I dread the consequences of these bold liberties taken with the Word of God. I fear (not so much because of the "stings in their tails" as because of the still sharper sting of ridicule which so crude an exposition might attach to sacred Truth,) to convert a scorpion's tail into the tail of a horse, and with another touch of barbarous mutilation both of quadruped and metaphor, to convert that tail into a Turkish standard. I can never believe that Pachas with one, two, or even three, tails would be likely to occupy a place in these symbols, and should the Turkish standard be unhappily lost in any future engagement, I do not

¹ Great and illustrious rulers are designated by this figure:—"There shall come a star out of Jacob," (Numb. xxiv. 17.); "How art thou fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning."—Isaiah, xvi. 12.

consider we should be warranted in looking for the prediction of such a mishap in the Apocalypse. I can see nothing to make me believe that Mahomet or Mahometanism ever entered into the mind of St. John ; and I look with equal suspicion on the history of Napoleon marching the Pope to Paris. Surely, if the Pope must be introduced upon all occasions by theologians of this school, it must be on the principle that he is of some use "*to gild the scene,*" for he certainly, as in the instance alluded to, takes no real part "*in the ceremony.*"

I *can* fancy that some poor persecuted martyr of those days, answering for his life before Nero, or thrown to the wild beasts at Ephesus, would be inspired with a tenfold courage and a fearlessness which no torments of man could shake, by the glorious promise of the first resurrection, and of the speedy desolation of the enemies of the Church ; but I cannot think that the prophecy of the irruption of the Mahometan locusts, or of the Pope's abstraction, would have given him much comfort at such an awful hour. One might as well have expected that our own Ridleys and Latimers would have been cheered at the stake with the prospect of the Russian invasion, or the French storming the gates of Rome. I *can* fancy that some "faithful Antipas," such as he who was "slain where Satan dwelleth," would have braved with greater intrepidity the axe and the sword, had he been aware that the vision had been seen of "a crown of life" glittering through the skies, and that the chant of a white-robed throng who had "come out of great tribulation" had been echoed back to earth ; but I cannot suppose that his soul would have been braced to a more exalted courage, from the prophetic anticipation of the agonies of that Papal martyr whose ring was so violently "torn from his finger," and who, in "the darkness which subsequently came upon his kingdom," was compelled to make an involuntary exhibition of himself at Paris. Surely the brain that could bring such light out of "darkness" must itself be partially obscured, or else we must charitably conclude that "the smoke of the furnace" from whence the Mahometan locusts sprang impeded a clearer vision.

Certain it is, that interpretations, lucid as these, do not commend themselves to minds of ordinary Bæotian intelligence—

certain it is, that the cause of religion is not promoted by such fantastical speculations—certain it is, that Scripture, reason, and common sense alike condemn such flights of imagination, and yet it is much to be questioned whether prejudice and a dogged adhesion to previously formed opinions will not prove too strong for them all.

LECTURE IX.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET AND SIXTH VIAL.

REV. ix. 13—21.

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16. And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship

REV. xvi. 12—16.

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood : which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk :

21. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

THE period over which the Fifth Trumpet extended, according to Dr. Cumming, was 150 years. He says, "From A.D. 612, the date of its rise, to A.D. 762, the date of its decay, is a period of 150 years, or precisely the five prophetic months, or five times thirty prophetic days, that is, literal years of the Apocalypse." The next trumpet, the Sixth, according to the same expositor, does not commence until the invasion of the Turks, in 1063, when, we are told, "The Turks invaded Christendom, and commenced a war against it, under Alp Arslan, called the valiant lion ; he crossed the Euphrates in the year 1063, at the head of immense masses of Turkish cavalry." *Here is an enormous leap of 301 years, during which this chronological history of the world and of the Church is silent.* Are we then to understand, that from the year 762 to the year 1063, no event took place worthy of being recorded in the Apocalypse ; and are we to believe that in a prophetic history, such as this is supposed to be, a gap could intervene of such extraordinary dimensions ?

As the prophetical record approaches nearer to our own times, these chronological omissions are no longer discernible. Thus, after an interval of 1800 years, the particulars of the French revolution are said to be predicted in the Apocalypse with minute exactness. The great continental victories of Marengo and Austerlitz are noted down with determinate precision. Napoleon and Nelson, Marat and Madame Maillard, are all but mentioned by name, and to such minutiae does the prophecy descend, that a particular hail storm which deluged the south of France finds a place in the Apocalypse, and a diminutive frog, called the Tractarian heresy, is heard to croak.

Now, if I wanted a test by which to try the correctness of these marvellous expositions, I should find it in the unprecedented anomaly that events near the date and age of the

Apocalypse are said to be mentioned with succinct brevity, and a monstrous gap of 301 years is suffered to roll away *without any notice at all*, whilst events so far off as almost to be lost in the distance of ages, are supposed to be recorded with great minuteness. In fact, according to this interpretation, St. John is made to predict those things most clearly from which he is farthest removed, and by a second sight of a most unusual kind, to anticipate the future with the most comprehensive exactitude, whilst he is comparatively blind to the present.

Such a distinct apprehension of things remote, to the detriment of things near at hand, is, to say the least of it, unusual in prophetic writers; and had St. John really jumped across the chasm which his expounders have dug for him, and had he really foretold the approach of the cholera and the Russian war, he would not only have been very much unlike all other prophets, but it might become matter of legitimate inquiry whether his prophecy deserved a place at all in the sacred canon.

Had Nahum prophesied on this principle respecting Nineveh, he would have said more about Layard's discoveries than about the Babylonian destroyer. Had the prophets who prophesied the return from the captivity thus uttered their predictions, they would have said more about Bishops Gobat and Alexander, than about their more immediate subject. But I think I need not waste time in exposing this fallacy: the bare mention of it is a sufficient refutation.

I proceed to give a concise view of the Sixth Trumpet and Vial as interpreted by Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming.

1st, the Trumpet.—“The four angels loosed from the river Euphrates” represent the invasion of Christendom by the Turks.

“The number of the army of the horsemen 200,000,000,” —“the myriads of the Turkish horse crossing the Danube.”

“The fire and brimstone out of the horses' mouths,” —*the cannon used to batter down Constantinople!!!*

I quote Dr. Cumming's words: “The sultan on this occasion hearing that a founder of cannon had deserted from the enemy, put the question to him, ‘*canst thou found a cannon large enough to batter down the wall of Constantinople?*’ and in the course of a few months a whole park of artillery

were pouring death and destruction on the devoted walls of that illustrious eastern capital."

"Their power in their tails"—the horse-tail standards of Turkey: this is explained by the story which we spoke of in the preceding lecture, respecting the Turkish chief cutting off the tail¹ of his horse.

The period during which this woe was to last, "an hour, a day, a month, and a year"—396 years, and 106 days. "Now the time when the Turks left Bagdad was A. D. 1057, the time when Constantinople fell was A. D. 1453, the former period commencing January 18th, and the latter period ending on May 29th, that is, according to the year-day principle, 396 years, and 106 days." This is said to be "*a great and all but indubitable fact.*"

Of the Sixth Vial, Dr. Cumming says, "The drying up of the great river Euphrates² is the evaporation of the Turkish power, contemporaneous with the return of the 'Kings of the East'—the Jews—to their own land."

After enumerating the great disasters which the Turks have sustained since 1820—their loss of Egypt, Greece, Algeria, Wallachia, Moldavia—the battle of Navarino—the Pacha of Egypt seizing upon Syria—the "wasting away of Turkey for

¹ Dr. Cumming says: "The coincidence between this feature in Turkish history and the Apocalyptic symbol is *striking*. It is so *startling*, so *unexpected*, as to afford the strongest possible presumption that the symbol is fulfilled by the historic facts I have now quoted."

² It has long been customary to explain this vial of the drying up of the Turkish power. Bishop Burnet says of Bishop Lloyd of Worcester, that he had foretold and proved from the Revelation the peace made between the Turk and the Emperor in the year 1698; and he was so positive in this, that he consented that all his scheme should be laid aside if ever the Turk engaged in a new war with them. But it is very well known, says Bishop Newton, that the Turk and the Emperor have engaged in a new war since that time; so by his own consent, his scheme is to be laid aside.

Mr. Elliott says: "The fall of the Turkish Empire, and the total drying up of its blood from the territory of Greek Christendom, will not be 1844, as Mr. Habershon had predicted, but 1849; he adds in a note, "Since this was written 1844 having ended without the fall of the Turkish Empire, has shown the fallacy of the above-mentioned calculation: my own suggestion as to 1849 still remains to be tested." 1855 gives a sufficient answer to these wild imaginations. But some men will not receive an answer, and nothing is more common than, when one date has been proved to be incorrect, for them to fix another.

want of Turks"—the earthquakes, famines, pestilences, fires which have destroyed the Turks since 1820—Dr. Cumming adds (and the fallacy of his words will be seen at a glance)—

"The last streamlet is barely discernible in the once full and overflowing channel of the great Euphrates. *The shadows of Russia and Britain are at this moment, by a strange combination, spread over it to prevent its entire evaporation.*"

I need not say that Dr. Cumming, like all expositors of unfulfilled prophecy, has here got out of his depth altogether. Russia is using strange means to prevent the evaporation of Turkey. The general impression is, that she would gladly have dried up the streams of the Euphrates, if by so doing she could have transferred the seat of government from St. Petersburg to Constantinople; and when he speaks of *Russia and Britain uniting* to effect this purpose, he surely must have had a glance into Sir Hamilton Seymour's despatches before the Government of this country had time to reject the proposal of the "division of the sick man's property."

"The three unclean spirits like frogs" are Infidelity, Popery, and Tractarianism; though what Tractarianism, an unclean spirit of so diminutive a size, has to do with the evaporation of the Turkish empire seems none of the clearest. They are said to be "like frogs," because France will be the chief supporter of Popery; and the ancient national arms of France was not the tricolor, but three frogs.

Of the "battle of the great day of God Almighty, when the kings of the earth and of the whole world are gathered together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon," I can find no account; but I subjoin one taken from a pamphlet, called "The Coming Struggle," the authorship of which I should be sorry to lay at Dr. Cumming's door, although, in some measure, his views prepare the way for such extraordinary rhapsodies:—

"All is ready. That awful pause which takes place before the shock of battle reigns around, but ere it is broken by the clash of meeting arms, and while yet the contending parties are at a little distance from each other, a strange sound is heard overhead. The time for the visible manifestation of God's vengeance has arrived; his fury has come up in his face, and he calls for a sword against Gog throughout all the mountains.

'Tis this voice of the Lord that breaks the solemn stillness, and startles the assembled hosts. The scene that follows baffles description. Amid earthquakes and showers of fire the bewildered and maddened armies of the autocrat rush, sword in hand, against each other, while the Israelites and their Anglo-Saxon friends gaze on the spectacle with amazement and consternation. It does not appear that they will even lift their hand against that foe which they had come so far to meet. Their aid is not necessary to accomplish the destruction of the image. The stone cut without hands shall fall on its feet, and break them to pieces, and then shall the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind shall carry them away. The various descriptions which we have of this battle all intimate that God is the only foe that shall contend with the autocrat at Armageddon. John terms it 'the battle of the great day of God Almighty,' and we believe the principal instrument of their defeat will be mutual slaughter. The carnage will be dreadful. Out of all the millions that came like a cloud upon the land of Israel, only a scattered and shattered remnant will return; the great mass will be left to 'cleave the land,' and fill the valley of Hamongog with graves."

I believe all this is to take place in about fifteen years.

Mr. Elliott holds out the same threat—"The important bearing of the true apocalyptic date, on apocalyptical interpretation, *will soon appear.*" If men of learning and sense will hold such views, we cannot wonder at the hallucinations of the Book of Mormon and of Joe Smith. We cannot wonder at the sanguinary contest of Armageddon, as described in the above-mentioned pamphlet. It seems to show that when once men have entered into a subject with previously formed views, nothing is too strange or out of the way to be brought into the channel of their own imaginations—no absurdities too great to be reconciled—no difficulties too severe to be overcome. I cite this description of the battle of Armageddon as an instance of the power which views like these might exercise in turning men to infidelity and atheism.

I hope to be able to place before you a more intelligible exposition of the Sixth Trumpet and the Sixth Vial, and before

doing so I must ask you to notice the points of identity between them.

Trumpet. The *sixth* angel sounded.

Vial. The *sixth* angel poured out his vial.

T. The four angels bound *in the river* — ἐπὶ τῷ ποταμῷ, at the river.

V. The vial poured out *on the river*—ἐπὶ τὸν ποταμὸν.

T. “*The great river Euphrates.*”

V. “*The great river Euphrates.*”

T. The four angels *prepared for the hour*, &c.—εἰς τὴν ὥραν, κ. τ. λ.

V. The way of the kings of the East *prepared*.

T. The four angels *loosed*.

V. The water *dried up* for the Eastern kings.

T. The *number* of the army 200,000,000.

V. The kings of the East and of the whole world *gathered*.

T. The third part of the men *killed*.

V. The *battle* of that great day of God Almighty.

T. The rest who were not *killed by these plagues* refusing to repent. (Compare Fourth Vial, Rev. xvi. 9. 11.)

V. The place “called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*.”¹

It is impossible not to recognise the marked identity between the Trumpet and Vial; indeed the only points of difference between them are, that “the four angels” of the Trumpet are called “the Kings of the East” under the Vial; and that, as is common in the Apocalypse, there is a fuller description of these armies under the one than the other. Add this to the identity already established between the previous

¹ The valley, or mountainous country of Megiddo, a village where King Josiah was slain by Pharaoh Necho, and pointed out by the prophet Zechariah as a spot where great mourning should take place over the slain. Hence it is selected to represent the spot where this battle of the great Day of God Almighty should take place; “The day of the Lord;” “The day of God,” i. e. the coming of Christ to destroy Jerusalem.

Trumpets and Vials, and it will tend to confirm the principle on which we have based these expositions.

The interpretation of this Trumpet and Vial I conceive to be as follows :—

Four angels, called “the kings of the East,” are to be loosed from “*the great river Euphrates*,” the water of which is to be “dried up,” so that their “way may be prepared ;” i. e., the region of the Euphrates is to be left in as defenceless a state as when Cyrus marched his Persians through the bed of the river, and took Babylon. The armies led by these four kings of the East, described under the vision as consisting principally of *horsemen*, are to be very *numerous* ; the number of them is said to be 200,000,000, meaning a great number. They are to *assist* the Romans in their work of devastating Judæa and Jerusalem, for they are “gathered together” with “the kings of the whole world” (the Roman Empire) “to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” The *slaughter* caused by them is to be so prodigious, that “the third part of the men are to be killed ;” and the lamentation and mourning of the Jewish people at the Valley of Megiddo, for the death of King Josiah, who was slain there by Pharoah Necho, is to be acted over again at this new Armageddon.

The first point is, — *Did such auxiliary forces assist the Romans in executing the vengeance of God against the Jews, and did they come from the region of the Euphrates ?*

I refer you to the historian of those times for an answer. Josephus¹ says : “Vespasian came by land into *Syria*” (the region of the Euphrates and of the kings of the East), “where he gathered together the Roman forces, *with a considerable number of auxiliaries from the kings of that neighbourhood.*”²

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 1.

² It appears also that these Eastern auxiliaries accompanied Cestius in his first attack upon Jerusalem. “Cestius took out of Antioch the 12th legion entire . . . besides those auxiliaries which were sent by the kings, of which Antiochus sent 2000 horsemen, and 3000 footmen, with as many archers ; and Agrippa sent the same number of footmen and 1000 horsemen ; Sohemus also followed with 4000, a third part whereof were horsemen ; but most part were archers ; there were also great numbers of auxiliaries gathered together from the free cities.”—Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 18.

We are next told the number of the kings who sent auxiliary troops from the East; *they are said to be four.*

“There were also a considerable number of auxiliaries got together from the *kings* Antiochus, Agrippa, and Sohemus, each of them contributing 1000 footmen that were archers, and 1000 horsemen. Malchus, also, the *king* of Arabia, sent 1000 horsemen, besides 5000 footmen, the greatest part of whom were archers; so that the whole army, *including the auxiliaries sent by the kings*, as well horsemen as footmen, when all were united together, amounted to 60,000, besides the servants, who, as they followed in vast numbers, so, because they had been trained up in war with the rest, ought not to be distinguished from the fighting men.”¹

Tacitus confirms the account of Josephus respecting the four kings: he mentions them all except Malchus; but though he leaves out the name of Malchus, he speaks of his Arabian soldiers; “*King Agrippa also was there, and King Sohemus, and the auxiliaries of King Antiochus, and a strong body of Arabians*, who, as is usual in nations that are neighbours to one another, went with their accustomed hatred against the Jews.”² Under both trumpet and vial it is particularly stated that these auxiliaries should come from *the region of the great river Euphrates*, and the meaning of this is explained in the parallelism, which calls the four angels bound at the Euphrates “*The kings of the East.*” Do the facts correspond with the prediction? Antiochus, one of these four kings, has his capital, Samosata³, on the Euphrates. Sohemus, King of Emesa, is a neighbouring king. Agrippa is King of Chalcis, and Malchus King of Arabia. *All four kings of the East.*

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 4.

² “Simul Agrippa, Sohemusque, reges, et auxilia regis Antiochi, *validaque, et solito inter accolæ odio infensa Judæis, Arabum manus.*”—Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. 1.

³ “Samosata, a place upon Euphrates.” (Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 15.) “Samosata, the capital of Commagene, lies upon Euphrates.” (Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 7.) “Sohemus was called king of Emesa” (Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 7.) That Malchus, king of Arabia, would be one of the kings of the East, is plain from a quotation of Clement, who calls Arabia and its neighbouring countries *the countries of the East*, — “*Ἰδωμεν τὸ παράδοξον σημεῖον τὸ γεγόμενον ἐν τοῖς ἀνατολικοῖς τόποις, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τοῖς περὶ τὴν Ἀραβίαν.*”—S. Clementis, Epist. ad Cor. i. 25.

Josephus confirms this by saying that some of the auxiliaries came from *Syria*, which country the Jews called "*the East*." ¹

"Besides whom marched those auxiliaries that came from the *kings*, being now more in number than before, together with a considerable number that came to his assistance from *Syria* . . . there followed him also 3000, drawn from those that guarded the river *Euphrates*." ²

And when Jerusalem fell, and the legions were disbanded, mention is made of the tenth legion being brought to that war from the *region of the Euphrates*. "Titus sent away the rest of his army to the several places where they would be best situated; but he permitted the tenth legion to stay as a guard at Jerusalem, and did not send them away *beyond the Euphrates, where they had been before*." ³

Put these things together. Armies are to come from the region of the Euphrates to assist in the destruction of Jerusalem; they are to be led by four kings, called the kings of the East, and the bed of the Euphrates is to be dried up, i. e. the region of the Euphrates is to be left as defenceless as in the days of Cyrus. It is found that auxiliary forces do come at this time from the region of the Euphrates; they are led by four kings who are all kings of the East⁴, and the legion that guarded the Euphrates is withdrawn, leaving the region of the Euphrates unprotected.

The four angels are said to be prepared for "an hour, a day, a month, and a year." Here is an error in the translation; the definite article is used, they are prepared unto "*The hour, the day, the month, and the year*" "*εἰς τὴν ὥραν*," i. e.

¹ Gen. xxix. 1.

² Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 1.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 1.

⁴ I am not aware of any passage in the Bible in which the Jews are called the "kings of the East." Although Judæa is an eastern country, the Jews hardly looked upon it as such. They considered Syria and the region of the Euphrates as the East.

Thus Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the "people of the East," i. e. to Syria. (Gen. xxix. 1.) Thus "Cyrus, the Persian," is said to come from the East; "Who raised up the righteous man from the East?" (Isaiah, xli. 2.) Thus "Wise men came from the East to Jerusalem" (Matt. ii. 1.); which confirms the idea that the Jews would never be spoken of as the "kings of the East."

the time, "the hour, the day, the month, and the year" of their invasion is settled and predetermined. The idea seems only a reiteration of our Lord's own words, "Of that day and of that hour knoweth no man;" these were "The times and seasons which the Father had put in his own power," but when that hour, and day, and month, and year arrived, the four angels are loosed to lead on the army of invasion.

We have next an account of their number.

Under the Trumpet.—"And the number of the army of the horsemen was 200,000,000, and I heard the number of them."

Under the Vial.—The same idea of numerosity is expressed by the *gathering* of the kings of the East and of the whole world "to the battle of *that great day*¹ of God Almighty."

This number cannot be taken literally. 200,000,000 would probably at that time be nearly the population of the whole world; it is computed now at only 1000 millions: in the allegorical language of the vision it simply means a great number.

Now was the number of these auxiliary Euphratean troops a great number? Josephus describes them, as "*A considerable number* of auxiliaries from the kings of that neighbourhood;" "Those auxiliaries that marched with Titus were *more in number* than those which marched with Vespasian;" "*A considerable number* came to his assistance from Syria."

¹ It ought not to be passed over, that this day is not only called "The day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5.), "The day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6.), "The day of Christ" (Phil. i. 10.), "The day of the Lord" (1 Thess. v. 2.), "The last day" (John, vi. 39.), "The end" (Matt. xxiv. 14.), "The day of judgment" (Matt. x. 15.), "That great and notable day of the Lord" (Acts, ii. 20.) But the mention of it became so familiar with the early Christians, that it was simply called "*that day*," without any further distinguishing epithet. Hence "the day when the Son of man is revealed" is called by St. Luke "*that day*" (Luke, xvii. 31.). "So *that day* come upon you unawares." (Luke, xxi. 34.) "Ye are not in darkness, that *that day* should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thess. v. 4.) "A crown of righteousness which the Lord . . . shall give me at *that day*." (2 Tim. iv. 8.) "The Lord grant that he may find mercy of the Lord on *that day*." (2 Tim. i. 18.) "As all was burning came *that 8th day* of the month Gorpheus upon Jerusalem." (Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8.) Thus it is also distinguished under this vial, as "*That great day*," that well-known day, which needed no further definition. "The battle of *that great day* of God Almighty."

We have next a description of these horsemen. “And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone, and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone¹; by these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths.”

At the outset let us remember that St. John saw these horses “in the vision.” Horses with “heads of lions, out of whose mouths issued fire, and brimstone, whose tails were like serpents,” must be imaginary creatures; and yet under this allegorical description we must expect to find a literal basis of the symbol.

It would seem that a great portion of these Euphratean auxiliaries would be cavalry, for St. John sees “the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them.” Each of the four kings supplied his quota of cavalry: each sent 1000 horsemen, besides foot soldiers; afterwards, under Titus, their number was considerably increased. I have previously mentioned that the Jews had no cavalry; consequently they stood in great dread of these horsemen, and hence the particular mention of the horsemen above the foot soldiers.

The “heads of these horses like the heads of lions”²—the

¹ We might as well argue that the country of Sodom was destroyed by a park of artillery, when “the Lord rained fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, and the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace,” as to say “that the fire, smoke, and brimstone,” out of these horses’ mouths, means the cannon used to batter down Constantinople. The evident meaning is, that the guilty Jews experienced as terrible judgments as the people of Sodom. This description is merely in accordance with a figure with which the Jews were familiar, which represented the punishments of the Almighty under the notion of frightful monsters let loose upon the disobedient. “For thy Almighty hand that made the world of matter without form, wanted not means to send among them a multitude of bears or fierce lions, or *unknown wild beasts, full of rage, newly created, breathing out a fiery vapour, or filthy scents of scattered smoke, or shooting horrible sparkles out of their eyes*, whereof not only the harm might dispatch them at once, but also the terrible sight utterly destroy them.”—Wisdom of Solomon, xi. 17, 18.

² “The harness and trappings of the horses were extremely rich and elegant. . . . In the earlier sculptures we find the figures of winged bulls and other symbolical devices on parts of the *head furniture*.”—Layard, vol. i. chap. 4.

heads of the horses of the eastern cavalry being ornamented with trappings to make them appear more terrible. Abundant illustrations of this can be found in the Nineveh marbles.

“Their power in their mouth and in their tails.”¹ — This may allude to the circumstance of the horses of the oriental nations being taught to fight as well as their riders, being trained to attack with their mouths and fore feet, and to repel with their hinder feet.

“And the breastplates of those that sat on them,” — not breastplates of iron, like the Romans, but breastplates of fire, of jacinth, and of brimstone, *i. e.* parti-coloured breastplates, dark red, and yellow, and fiery, a circumstance not unusual amongst eastern nations.

There is no necessity for entering into the minutiae of the symbol. It is quite sufficient for our purpose to be able to show that a great proportion of these Euphratean auxiliaries were cavalry, and that they were exceedingly formidable to their Jewish enemies.

I have yet to show the slaughter occasioned by these Euphratean horsemen. Under the trumpet, the third part of the men are said to be killed. “By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.”

Under the vial, this slaughter is allegorically represented by three unclean spirits like frogs², out of the mouth of the dragon (the devil), out of the mouth of the beast (the Roman power), and the false prophet (the Jewish Antichrist), gathering the kings of the east, the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”³

¹ Alexander's celebrated horse Bucephalus is said to have been as fierce in battle as his terrible rider. “Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are *more fierce* than the evening wolves.” — Habbakuk, i. 8.

² “ὡς βάτραχοι.” These seem to designate persons falsely pretending to miracles. So Artemid. ii. 15. cited by Heinr. “βάτραχοι ἄνδρας γοητὰς καὶ βωμόλοχους προσημαιοῦσι.” — Bloomfield.

³ This gathering together of the kings of the east, the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to the “Battle of that great day of God Almighty,” is

It would appear that the hereditary enemies of the Jews who came from the region of the Euphrates played no inconsiderable part in the slaughter of that great day of God Almighty. Josephus speaks of the "innate enmity" between the Syrians and the Jewish people; he also gives us an account of the barbarity practised by the Syrians against the Jewish deserters in order to discover the gold they had swallowed.

"The *multitude* of the Arabians and Syrians cut up those that came to them as supplicants, and searched their bellies for gold;" he adds, "No greater misery befell the Jews than this, since in one night's time about 2000 of these deserters were thus dissected. When Titus came to the knowledge of this wicked practice, he had like to have surrounded those that had been guilty of it with his horse, and have shot them dead, *had not their number been so very great*, and those that were liable to this punishment more than those whom they had slain."

The Roman general was obliged to content himself with reproving these savage eastern allies for their inhumanity. "Do the Arabians and Syrians," he said, now govern themselves, and out of their barbarity in murdering men, and out of their hatred to the Jews, get it ascribed to the Romans?" Even this did not check the cruelty of these savage warriors, for they would go out still and meet those that deserted from the city, and looking about them to see that no Romans saw them, they dissected the miserable Jews, and pulled the gold out of their bellies.¹

It would seem probable, then, that the Jews had no more terrible enemies than these armies loosed from the Euphrates,

not a new idea introduced here for the first time. Our Lord had already predicted that such should be the case; "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, *κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων*,"—surrounded by camps,—then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." (Luke, xxi. 20.) He declared of that period, there should be "upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity," *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς συνοχὴ ἐθνῶν ἐν ἀπορίᾳ*, i. e. that there should be upon the land of Judæa a blockade,—*συνοχὴ ἐθνῶν*, obsidio, ambitus quo aliquid undique circumdatur,—"*ἐν ἀπορίᾳ*," accompanied with straitness, rerum penuriâ,—where the land, ἡ γῆ, Judæa, which suffers the blockade is forcibly n^t trusted with the Gentiles, *ἔθνη*, who should inflict it.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 13.

— they were the hereditary¹ enemies of the Jewish people, who upon every previous visitation rejoiced to say of Jerusalem: “Down with it, down with it, even unto the ground.” At this battle of the great day of God Almighty, the kings of the East, the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, *i. e.* the Euphratean monarchs, the Jewish princes, and the Roman generals united in making the valleys round Jerusalem reek with slaughter.

Observe, then, there is no improbability in the statement, “By these was the third part of men killed.” There is no violence done to facts which took place at that time, when it is said that spirits of devils working miracles gathered together the kings of the East, the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to the Armageddon, the valley of slaughter, the grave of the Jewish nation, the battle-field of the great day of Almighty God.

It remains for me to show that “The rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

“Neither repented they of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, &c.”

I have no positive proof to offer to establish the point that the Jews and the lapsed Christians of those days were idolaters. But Roman customs had then so far prevailed in Judæa, that theatres, and public games, and gladiatorial shows, had become common.² Roman emperors had attempted to place their

¹ Eleazar in his speech to the Jews of Masada confirms this point. He says, “It would be too long for me to speak at this time of every destruction brought upon us, for you cannot but know that there was not any one Syrian city which did not slay their Jewish inhabitants, and were *not more bitter enemies to us than were the Romans themselves.*” — Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 8.

² “He (Herod) also built the other edifices, the amphitheatre, and theatre, and market-place . . . and appointed games every fifth year, and called them “Cæsar’s games.” — Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 21.

“Now the king (Herod) had put up a golden eagle over the great gate of

statues in the temple at Jerusalem. Caligula had sent an army under Petronius to effect this object, and Nero had publicly set himself against the Supreme God.

Of the remaining charges against the Jews of those days, I have complete and convincing proof.

“*Neither repented they of their murders.*”—Here I could fill a volume. Our Lord stamped them with the brand of “murderers ;” and their history at this period especially is the history of men stained with “ten thousand murders.”

“A deep silence, and a kind of deadly night, had seized upon the city, while yet the *robbers* were still more terrible than these miseries were themselves ; for they brake open those houses which were no other than graves of dead bodies, and plundered them of what they had, and tried the points of their swords on their dead bodies ; and in order to prove what mettle they were made of, they thrust some of those through that still lay alive upon the ground. As for those that entreated them to lend them their right hand, and their sword to despatch them, they were too proud to grant their requests, and left them to be consumed by the famine.”¹ “When the country was purged of these there sprang up another sort of robbers in Jerusalem, which were called Sicarii, *who slew men in the day time, and in the midst of the city* ; this they did chiefly at the festivals, when they mingled themselves among the multitude, and concealed daggers under their garments, with which they stabbed those that were their enemies.”²

“As for the richer sort, it proved all one to them whether they staid in the city or attempted to get out of it ; for they were equally destroyed in both cases ; *for every such person*

the temple, which these learned men exhorted them to cut down ; . . . they therefore let themselves down from the top of the temple with thick cords, and this at mid-day, . . . and cut down that golden eagle with axes.”—Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 33.

“The amphitheatre at Jericho.”—Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 33.

“Hippodrome at Tarichææ.”—Flav. Jos. Vita, 27.

“Hippodrome at Jerusalem.”—Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 3.

“Sed quanta deliquerint (Judæi) fiduciâ patrum inflati, derivantes (i. e. deviantes) a disciplinâ in profanum modum, etsi ipsi non confiterentur, probaret exitus hodiernus.”—Tertulliani Apol. 21.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 12.

² Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 13.

was put to death, under this pretence, that they were going to desert, but in reality that the robbers might get what they had."¹

"Nor of their sorceries," "φαρμακειῶν."

Among the miseries of those days, the sorceries of false prophets were conspicuous. Our Lord foretold it should be so. "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many."

Time only allows me to mention a few cases of this kind :—

Six thousand men, women, and children, fled for refuge to the roof of the cloisters of the temple whilst the temple was burning, and there perished. "A false prophet," says the historian, "was the cause of their destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city on that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive deliverance."

"Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants (John and Simon) to impose upon the people."²

"There was also another body of wicked men gotten together, not so impure in their actions, but more wicked in their intentions, who laid waste the happy state of the city no less than did these murderers. *These were such men as deceived and deluded the people under pretence of divine inspiration.* . . . And these prevailed with the multitude to act like madmen, and went before them into the wilderness, as pretending that God would there show them the signals of liberty."³

"When Felix was procurator of Judæa, he seized and put to death many of these impostors every day."⁴

"Nor of their fornication."

This charge, also, is fearfully substantiated. "They indulged themselves in feminine wantonness without any disturbance, till they were satiated therewith; while they decked their hair, and put on women's garments, and were besmeared over with ointments; and that they might appear very comely, they had paints under their eyes, and imitated not only the

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10.

³ Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 13.

² Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 5.

⁴ Jos. Antiq. xx. 8. 5.

ornaments, but also the lusts of women, and were guilty of such intolerable uncleanness, that they invented unlawful pleasures of that sort. And thus did they roll themselves up and down in the city, as in a brothel house, and defiled it entirely with their impure actions; nay, while their faces looked like the faces of women, they killed with their right hand; and when their gait was effeminate, they presently attacked men, and became warriors, and drew their swords from under their finely dyed cloaks, and ran every body through whom they alighted upon.”¹

“*Nor of their thefts.*”

After the preceding proof, I need not stop to establish this. It seems that even the vessels of the temple were not respected. “As for John, when he could no longer *plunder* the people, he betook himself to sacrilege, and melted down many of the sacred utensils which had been given to the temple, as also many of those vessels which were necessary for such as ministered about holy things; nay, he did not abstain from those pouring vessels that were sent them by Augustus and his wife. Whereas this man, who was a Jew, seized upon what were the donations of foreigners. And here I cannot but speak my mind, and what the concern I am under dictates to me; and it is this: I suppose that had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom perished by; for it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such punishments; for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed.”²

“Neither repented they of their *murders*, nor of their *sorceries*, nor of their *fornication*, nor of their *thefts*.”

Here I close our examination of the Sixth Trumpet and Sixth Vial; trusting I may be suffered to say without presumption, that events of the date and age of the Apocalypse afford a reasonable and satisfactory coincidence with the prediction.

I must leave others to judge the degree of truthfulness with

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 9.

² Ibid. lib. v. cap. 13. 13.

which the date of the Trumpet is referred by these commentators to A.D. 1063, and the date of the Vial to A.D. 1 I am willing, also, to abide by their decision respecting the correctness of "*the great and all but indubitable fact,*" by which "THE hour, the day, the month, and the year" is extended into 396 years and 106 days. I certainly have felt some difficulty myself in comprehending how during the whole of that specified period "the rest of the men—a particular generation of men—which were not killed by these plagues repented not of their deeds;" but I suppose their lives must have been lengthened out on the year-day principle. I must be content to let the positive assertion, that "the shadows of Russia and Great Britain are at this moment, by a *strange combination*, spread over Turkey to prevent its entire evaporation" rest upon whatever degree of credit may be given to it, simply observing that the "*combination*" of these two amicable powers declares itself, as Dr. Cumming says, in a "*strange*" manner, and not exactly in conformity with the terms of a very intimate alliance. And I must also suffer the truthful statement that "*Russia and Britain have united*" to effect this purpose, to stand for what it is worth. But though a fear of seeming determined to find fault with everything induces me to leap, like my opponents, over the chasm of "301 years," during which time no sublunary transaction was dignified by a place in the Apocalypse, and though the instinctive horror of being thought a Puseyite cautions me to be deaf just now to the croaking of that diminutive frog called Tractarianism (for it is possible, although not very probable, that St. John might have heard it all the way from St. Barnabas to Patmos), yet there is one point of this learned exposition which at the present crisis it were injustice to the public interests to pass over without comment.

I need not enlarge on the well known fact that we continue to find some difficulty in knocking down the walls of Sebastopol. After hammering at them for some time no satisfactory progress seems to have been made. We have tried Lord Raglan and General Canrobert, and we are talking now of Mr. Nasmyth and Lord Dundonald. How is it that no one has ever thought of Dr. Cumming? Surely if he could batter down Constantinople *with a new kind of horse-artillery, com-*

posed of cannon proceeding out of horses' mouths !!! he can batter down Sebastopol. Besides which the great point with us just now is to get a *cannon large enough* to penetrate those provoking earth-works of the Russians ; and it would seem that our guns, although indifferently well served, will not pierce more than six or eight feet into the defences of the enemy. A patriotic thought suggests itself. Let us not trouble ourselves about the inventors of modern mysteries in the art of war—let us not imperil human life by dangerous experiments with new powers of destruction—let us not entertain the new fangled notion of Lord Dundonald on the orthodox ground of “*omne ignotum pro horribili*,” whether in chemical science or Apocalyptical interpretation, nor think for a moment of the great gun of Mr. Nasmyth. But let us go to the still greater hero of Constantinople, and seriously put the question “*Canst THOU found a cannon large enough to batter down the wall of the city of the Czar ???*” and doubtless “in the course of a few months a whole park of artillery will be pouring death and destruction on the devoted walls of that illustrious capital.”¹

And here let me observe, once for all, that I do not make these remarks in the spirit of bitterness and uncharitableness, and God is my witness, that I do not desire to speak otherwise than with deep seriousness of His most Holy Word. This light and flippant tone is not a commentary on the text of Scripture, but on its would-be commentators, and is chargeable, not to me, but to those whose absurdities have provoked, and whose serious defence of, and persistence in, those absurdities continue to demand it. *The evil lies deep* ; it is not a mere surface wound ; but it has penetrated the system, and is draining the life-blood of Christianity. The day of gentle remonstrance and bland expostulation has gone by, and it is not only a solitary divine somewhat notorious for eccentricities of biblical interpretation, but a theological school, at the height of an undeserved popularity—a popularity gained in too many cases by pandering to the taste for dreamy expositions of the unknown future,—which must be met, in whatever way its errors may be most readily exposed, whether in the stern arena of logic and

¹ Apocalyptic Sketches.

argument, or in the lighter field of ridicule and satire. It is a well-known and a pitiable fact that hundreds of pulpits in the Church of England are resounding with expositions of the Apocalypse based on arguments which would insult the reason of a child, and defended by sophistries of which a special pleader would be ashamed. It is, I repeat it, a thoroughly ascertained and a most deplorable reality, that no small portion of the aggregate of our fellow Christians are taking it for granted, that in giving ear to visionary conjectures respecting a personal reign of Christ on earth and the splendours of a millennial paradise, they are being instructed in the things which belong to their everlasting peace. "Leaving the paths of Christian doctrine and duty, men have occupied themselves and their readers and congregations in reveries respecting the future. This would be bad enough if such themes rested only on mere opinion, but unfortunately they are based, by those who give utterance to them, on the word of God. There is reason to fear that thousands of persons are deluded into the idea that they are being edified and advanced in their Christian career, who are listening to mere fables, and those whom the certainty of death and judgment cannot arouse to religious zeal are quickened into an artificial life (like a corpse subjected to voltaic action) by expositions of the Apocalypse."¹

Painfully aware that this deep and most serious error, continually gaining strength from the morbid taste of the day, and from the superficial acquaintance with the Scriptures which characterises our times, is permeating the veins and arteries, yea, and the very framework of the Church of God,—sadly conscious that it may go on from bad to worse until the hour of reaction comes, when its most zealous supporters will be the first to recalcitrate, and to turn with disgust from such false systems of theology, if not in despair even from the truth itself,—deeply and thoroughly convinced that no light touch can sweep away the mass of accumulated crudities, that no gentle hand can pull down the towering structure erected by these visionary builders,—by no means insensible to that beguiling eccentricity of the human mind which is apt to prefer the splendid creations of the imagination to the somewhat duller

¹ Journal of Sacred Literature, April, 1855.

details of fact, so earnestly desirous, as it were, of a glowing future, that it inclines to what it fears may be false, because it harmonises with its own aspirations, rather than to what it believes must be true;—in a word, persuaded that a cherished enemy, fatal to reasonable religion, is nourished and fostered in the bosom of the Church itself, I have not thought any mode by which such an enemy may be overcome either beneath the dignity or the importance of the subject. As the ancient warrior, armed with javelin, sword, and bow, launched in turn all his weapons against his adversary, now wounding him with his arrows from a distance, now beating him down with his ponderous sword, so have I thought (and with what amount of propriety I must leave others to decide) that the adversaries to the cause of truth may fairly be encountered with arguments of every kind, and that if the result be victory, it will matter little whether the enemy succumbed to the heavier strokes of logical inference and inductive reasoning, or to the lighter yet more piercing shafts of those less weighty, yet often more effectual weapons, by which folly can best be combated.

Some might have suggested a contemptuous indifference as a better course, but to sit still and wait for the river to flow down, although a dignified, is but a slow method of opposing error; and to sneer at the eccentricities of Apocalyptical commentators without substituting a more reasonable view, is but to aggravate the disorder you wish to cure.

I humbly conceive that the day is come when this giant evil must be grappled with, and that too not by contempt poured upon a false system, but by the introduction of a better. It must not only be shown that folly will not bear the scrutiny of close examination, but that reason is prepared to offer a more satisfactory theory. It must be shown that legitimate deduction is not afraid to stand side by side with visionary conjecture, and that the fair symmetry of truth suffers no damage when contrasted with the ungainly deformity of error. Let this, then, be my defence and my apology in the course I have somewhat unwillingly taken. But for the apathy of former years, which has suffered the evil to attain its present magnitude, and but for the silence of those who ought to have put forth a better system, a different plan might have been adopted with success. As it is, we can afford to throw away no chances of victory, and we

must persevere in our ungrateful task, even under the charge of making Holy Scripture a butt for scoff and ribaldry, or of a want of due seriousness in the handling of holy things.

Neither, again, let me be suspected of a want of becoming consideration to the theological opinions of many good and excellent men, whose greatest fault appears to be that "their hearts are so much better than their heads." We are dealing with principles, not with individuals, and we need not love the men the less because their religious views happen to differ from our own. Surely to refuse to probe the wound for fear of giving pain, or to hesitate to administer the drug because it is nauseous to the taste, is but a mock charity after all.

LECTURE X.

THE OPEN BOOK.

REV. x.

1. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

2. And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left *foot* on the earth.

3. And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6. And swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

DAN. xii.

1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

3. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

6. And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, How long *shall it be* to the end of these wonders?

7. And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his

8. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go *and* take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it*, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

REV. xi. 1, 2.

1. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months.

right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever, that *it shall be* for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished.

8. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?

9. And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

11. And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

12. Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

13. But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

THE subject before us of the Open Book is, perhaps, one of the most mysterious and difficult in the Apocalypse. It appears to be rather a Codicil to the Sixth Trumpet than an integral part of the Trumpet itself; consequently we must not expect to find any great identity between it and the Sixth Vial; and yet, as is common in the duplicate form in which these symbols are presented, there is an allusion to the subject in the one which is carried out more fully in the other. I need only mention the parallel case of the locust armies of Rome and their Euphratean allies, detailed at great length under the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets, but only briefly introduced in the Vials, — the destruction of Babylon graphically de-

picted under the Seventh Vial, but only incidentally referred to under the Seventh Trumpet, — to show that the principle is common to the Apocalypse. It is quite certain that it forms a part of the Sixth Trumpet; for that Trumpet does not end till the 14th verse of Chap. xi., the limit of the Trumpet being settled by the words of verse 14. “The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.”

I attempt the solution of it with doubt and misgiving: I look at the host of conflicting opinions, and seem to feel that mine will be only one more added to the heap. Hitherto, I have had that conviction of truth which always accompanies interpretations grounded on reason and Scripture; I have seemed to myself to be right, and that without straining a single allegory, or forcing a single symbol. Now I appear cast adrift on the wide ocean of conjecture. I cannot fly to Jewish or heathen contemporaneous testimony, and the opinions of the Christian Church from the earliest ages down to our own times are as diversified as they are unsatisfactory. But of one thing I feel sure, that whatever interpretation is offered must be one suited to the date and age of the Apocalypse; it must be found *then*, or not at all. The Apocalypse must be one grand and perfect whole, or it is nothing; no ingenuity can separate its compact and consentaneous uniformity, no sophistry disannul the unequivocal declaration that it is a revelation of “things which must shortly come to pass.” Better to endeavour to explain its mysteries, than deny its positive assertions — better to receive its wonders than contravene its statements. True, we may resolve them all into futurity¹, and this is the course generally adopted by commentators when any difficulty arises, and a most convenient course it is; for, as no one can refute that which has not yet taken place, so no one, from the necessary ignorance of things future, can positively say that such things shall not be. But here, again, we are met with the difficulty that the prophecy is of *immediate* fulfilment; and how can we explain its symbols of the distant

¹ “It is a very natural, and indeed constant result with the interpreters of prophecy to push into futurity everything that cannot be readily made out. It was this, as we shall presently see, which induced many of the Fathers to place the Antichrist not far from the dissolution of all things.” — Professor Lee, Preface, 1849.

future, without impeaching the veracity of the author? Added to this, the Apocalypse, equally with those sayings of our Lord in the Gospels which inseparably connect his coming with the close of the Mosaic economy, reveals certain positive data of time, place, and object, which confine its predictions within a given limit, and associated with these, it also unfolds contemporaneous mysteries of a spiritual nature for which the same data must be conceded. For instance, in the Gospels, the time of our Lord's coming is defined to be within the lifetime of those who heard his words,—the place, Judæa,—and the object, the punishment of that “evil and adulterous generation;” and this is contemporaneous with “The sign of the Son of man in heaven,”—equivalent to his “coming with clouds,”—the mission of the angels, and the gathering of the elect. So in the Apocalypse, He is to come “quickly;” while the temple is yet standing, and before the Gentiles have “trodden down the Holy City,”—the place to which He comes is Judæa; for “they also which pierced Him” (the Jews) are to look upon Him, and the object of his coming is to tread “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God,” “*without the city,*” Jerusalem; and this is to take place simultaneously with the armies of heaven following him, and the gathering of the 144,000. It will be seen that, in each of these, there is a part capable of proof, and a part which is not. There can be no doubt about the question of time, place, and object; this can be proved to demonstration, because of its implication with known historical facts; the other, from the very nature of the case, cannot be proved to the same extent. Now, if it is the part of reason to argue from what we do know up to what we do not know, it does not become us to decide that such predictions of the Apocalypse as are capable of proof may have been fulfilled, but that contemporaneous predictions which are not capable of such kind of proof must be resolved into an indefinite future. Surely, to say the least, it is taking a great liberty with Scripture to admit some of its sayings, the truth of which we are unable to deny, and to contravene or postpone others, because they do not equally fall within the reach of our comprehension. If we are to believe only what we can reduce to Q. E. D., perhaps no doctrine of Christianity will abide the test; and it is questionable whether the objection may not be

applied successfully, even to the existence of a First Great Cause.

As in any science, part of which we know, and part of which we do not know, we should not be justified in refusing to adopt those settled principles with which we are acquainted, because of our inability to grasp the whole ; so, with regard to the predictions respecting the coming of our Lord, in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse ; the fulfilment of that part which is known and which is capable of proof, should satisfy us that no impossibility attaches to the contemporaneous accomplishment of that part which cannot be known, and which is not equally capable of proof ; but, on the contrary, the fulfilment of the one should be a sufficient guarantee for the corresponding accomplishment of the other,—although, from necessary causes, it does not come within reach of the same kind of proof.

In pursuing our examination of the subject of the Open Book, we shall first briefly give the opinions of those from whom we differ ; and I hesitate not to say, that *any* interpretation will be better than that laid down by Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming. I give, as nearly as I can, the substance of their interpretations, leaving out, as a matter totally unconnected with the point in question, the history of Martin Luther, which occupies about fifty pages of Dr. Cumming's book.

The "mighty angel coming down from heaven,"—is the angel of the covenant, the Son of God. "Clothed with a cloud,"—the symbol of Deity. The "rainbow upon his head,"—the recognised symbol of his eternal covenant. "His face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire,"—emblematical of divine power and majesty. The descent of this angel,—the Reformation in the sixteenth century. The "open book,"—the Bible unclasped by Luther. "His right foot on the land, and the left foot on the sea,"—*the Pope*, with one foot on the land and the other on the sea, the gigantic usurper claiming the whole world as his temporal dominion. "The cry as when a lion roareth,"—*the roaring of Pope Leo X. against Luther!!!* The "seven thunders,"—*the thunders of the Vatican!!!* The command to "seal up the seven thunders and write them not,"—the command to Luther to despise the thunders of the Vatican. The intention of St. John, "I was about to write,"—the difficulty in Luther's mind

about disobeying the authority of the Church of Rome. The voice from heaven, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered and write them not,"—the command of God prevailing in Luther's mind above the command of the Pope ; so that whilst Rome said, "write the thunders," the voice from heaven said "write them not," care not for the anathema of man, but for the benediction of God. The angel's oath, "there should be time no longer, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared unto his servants, the prophets,"—the general belief prevalent at the time of the Reformation that the Millennium was about to begin. The declaration that the book which St. John was commanded to eat should "make his belly bitter, and should be in his mouth sweet as honey,"—that Luther's preaching should be bitter in his experience, but sweet in the issue. And the charge, "thou must prophesy again before many people and nations and tongues and kings,"—the revival of preaching, which had grown obsolete at the time of the Reformation.

Under the sad and painful conviction that I may fail, equally with those whose views I condemn, I must be forgiven if, in the midst of sacred things, I cannot resist a smile at this most marvellous exposition.

The mighty angel is one moment the Lord Jesus Christ : the next moment he is metamorphosed into Pope Leo X. I presume one great point of resemblance must be that Pope *Leo* would naturally roar as a *lion* ; the original is, "ὡς περ λέων μυκάται," the word is used of the lowing of a *bull* or an *ox*. Upon such a system of interpretation, this ought to be positive evidence that *the Papal Bull* must be intended. He comes down from heaven with all the insignia of Deity, "clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow upon his head," when, lo, a magic wand of theological interpretation touches him, and he is immediately changed into the territory-grasping Pope.

I need scarcely point out the unavoidable resemblance between the loud voice of the angel, illustrated by seven thunders uttering their voices, and the thunders of the Vatican. As the word, *lion*, naturally suggested the idea of *Pope Leo*, so must "*The seven thunders*" have harmonised directly with *the thunders of the Vatican*. What exposition can be more lucid than that

which explains the intention of St. John—"I was about to write"—of the difficulty in Luther's mind about disobeying the authority of the Church of Rome, or "the voice from heaven saying, write them not," into an injunction "not to care for the anathema of man, but for the benediction of God."

We have seen many ridiculous and absurd expositions of this book as we have gone along: we have seen "fire out of horses' mouths" converted into cannon; "tails of scorpions" into Turkish standards; seals indicative of terror and despair, into seasons of triumph and prosperity; half an hour, into seventy-five years; five months, into 150 years; and an hour, a day, a month, and a year, into 396 years, 106 days, during the whole of which precise period men "repented not of their murders, of their sorceries, of their fornications, nor of their thefts." We have seen surprising liberties taken with chronology; and seals, and trumpets, and vials, defined to a hair's breadth: we have jumped into the sixteenth century at one bold leap, although the prophecy is one of "things which must shortly come to pass," and, thanks to Merle D'Aubigny, we have a very beautiful and concise abridgment of the history of the Reformation.

But somehow or other I cannot get over this roaring of Pope Leo X. against Luther, and this metamorphose of the seven thunders into the thunders of the Vatican.

Happy those who can give credit to such marvellous expositions: happy those to whom their great oracle may propose, without risk of gainsaying, the change of the mighty angel into Pope Leo X., and the thunders of his mighty voice into the thunders of the Vatican. They will have no difficulty in believing that the increased "sale of piano-fortes is an earnest of the preparation for millennial harmony;" they will see no serious obstacle to the progressive steps of chronological interpretation by which we are to arrive at millennial perfection in the year 1885.

I regret to say this is not the case with minds of a different order. Unfounded assertions like these are the cause of much of the prevailing infidelity of the day: men of common sense and common judgment see at a glance the absurdities of such views, and they recoil from Truth because of the fool's mantle which is occasionally wrapped round it. And what makes it

all the more painful is that the mantle is one stained and dyed with aspersion and invective against an erring Church. An angel from heaven might have uttered his voice in vain ; he might have roared as a lion roareth, and no man would have heard him :—but if he can be changed into the Pope roaring against Luther—if the thunders of his voice can be made to signify the thunders of the Vatican—the seven thunders are at once intelligible, Leo the Tenth is discernible under the dress of the angel of the covenant, and the mental intentions of the son of the miner of Mansfeld are apparent under the doubtings of St. John.

But as it is easier to complain than to provide a remedy, to find fault than to offer a cure, I have not thought myself at liberty to condemn the views of others without substituting opinions which they have a right equally to condemn : accordingly, I proceed to give a somewhat different explanation of the subject, leaving the decision to the intelligence of, in many cases, a rightly judging world.

Before I attempt an explanation, I shall premise, with the Rev. Isaac Williams in his preface, “There is hardly a passage in the Apocalypse which does not contain some allusion to an image or expression of the prophets.” Bishop Andrewes says, “It is not that Daniel is the basis of these prophecies, but all the old Scriptures alike, or if any one part more than another, the prophet Ezekiel.” I introduce the subject in this manner because it is expressly mentioned in the passage which we are about to consider, that “the mystery of God would be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, *as he hath declared unto his servants the prophets,*” and because much of this chapter is an allusion to Dan. xii. and to Ezekiel ii. It will be natural, then, to look in the writings of the prophets, especially in those of Daniel, for a clue to this enigma. Hitherto we have had no distinct appeal to the prophecies of the Old Testament. The different plagues falling upon the Jewish people have been rather allusions than distinct references to the predictions of the Old Testament. Now the subject opens with a decided call to investigate prophecy, and an intimation is conveyed to us that what is about to take place is only in accordance with what God had previously “*declared unto his servants the prophets.*”

I shall hope I am entering upon the right path in examining this question if I follow the line laid down for me by the Spirit of God. "*The Prophets*" must now explain the Apocalypse. Heathen and Jewish testimony are of no more avail. We must compare spiritual things with spiritual, and the writings of St. John with those of his prototype Daniel. If the view now taken differs, as I believe it will, from the view of any comparatively modern commentator on the Book of Revelation, still I shall not be disheartened, if it is found to be in accordance with God's Holy Word.

But first let us inquire what is the Open Book supposed to be. Primasius says, "The Book in his hand no longer sealed, but open, is the Gospel of God:" Vitringa, "The calamities that were to befall the church under the sixth trumpet:" Mede, "A syllabus of Roman civil and political history:" Moses Stuart, "The sealed book being now at its close, St. John needed new directions for prophesying:" Elliott and Cumming, "The Bible unclasped by Luther:" Williams, "The manifestation of the Gospel to the world."

Here is a great variety. To the last of these I should feel most inclined to accede, were it not for the circumstance that I do not see the propriety of the Gospel being called a Book at this period. At the date of the Apocalypse, it is even questionable whether all the Gospels were written, or, if written, whether compiled into a canon, and in Rev. xiv. 6., where the angel is seen flying through the midst of heaven, "having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people,"—i. e. not only to the inhabitants of Judæa, but to the heathen world—no mention whatever is made of a book. The only book alluded to in the whole Bible as the canon of Scripture is the Book of the Old Testament. It is possible that the Epistles in those days had only found their way to the several Churches to which they were addressed. St. Paul's direction to the Colossians seems to imply this: "When this Epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea."¹ At farthest, at this early period they were only read in neighbouring churches,

¹ Col. iv. 16.

and it is altogether improbable that the Gospel had assumed then its present form of a book.

Neither is it easy to understand why the New Testament should be called "*an Open Book*," or what this Open Book has to do with the "*mystery of God being finished*," and in what way it is alluded to by his "*servants the prophets*."

It remains to be seen if the prophecy of Daniel, with which we are about to compare the prediction of St. John, will give any clue by which to discover the meaning of this Open Book; and before I institute a parallelism between the symbol of the Apocalypse and the declarations of God's "*servants the prophets*," I shall advance a few reasons which lead me to suppose that the Open Book in the hand of the mighty angel is neither "*the Bible unclasped by Luther*," nor "*the manifestation of the Gospel to the world*," but "*The Book of Life*."

It has been previously said, that although there was no great amount of identity between this part of the Sixth Trumpet and Sixth Vial, yet there was an allusion to the subject in the one, which was carried out more fully in the other.

It will be necessary to explain this.

Under the Trumpet we have a mighty angel coming down from heaven, with an Open Book. Under the Vial, our Lord comes as a thief, and pronounces a blessing upon those who "*watch and keep their garments lest they walk naked*."

Now, by a comparison of Rev. xvi. 15. with the charge given to the Church at Sardis, Rev. iii. 3—5., it will be seen, that the expression to watch and keep their garments lest they should walk naked, is accompanied by the promise of being written in "*The Book of Life*."

SIXTH VIAL.

"Behold I *come as a thief*."
 "Blessed is he that *watcheth*."
 "And *keepeth his garments*."
 "Lest he *walk naked* (i. e. not clad in white ¹) and they see his shame."²

CHARGE TO THE CHURCH OF SARDIS.

"I will *come on thee as a thief*."
 "If thou shalt not *watch*."
 "A few names which have not *defiled their garments*."
 "They shall *walk with me in white*, for they are worthy."³

¹ Compare 2 Cor. v. 3.

² Rev. iii. 3—5.

³ Rev. xvi. 15.

In these parallel passages the idea intended to be conveyed is, that they who watch and keep their garments, should walk with their Lord *in white*, and this, in the charge to the Church of Sardis, is said to be equivalent to having their names *written in the Book of Life*. "He that overcometh the same shall be clothed *in white raiment*, and I will not blot out his name out of the *Book of Life*."¹ So that the idea expressed under the Vial is similar to that which is more fully carried out under the Trumpet; and the promise of the one, "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame," is identical with the Book of Life of the other.

This is of no small importance, inasmuch as it not only tends to throw light upon a very dark subject, but also serves to increase the closeness of the identity between the Trumpets and Vials.

Added to this, in the apostolical Book of Hermas, of which mention has been already made, "A mighty angel,"—*nuntius magnificus*,—is represented as visiting at this period the Jewish people, "*to whom he gave the law*," with a view of "*writing*" their names in a book.

"That glorious and good angel is Michael, who is the prince and governor of this people . . . therefore he visits those to whom he gave the law ('ordained by angels'²), to see whether they have kept it."³ "Keep the laws of God and thou shalt be approved, and shalt be *written* in the number of those who keep his laws."⁴

This is found in a book evidently written in imitation of the Apocalypse, in all probability during the lifetime of the Apostles, and certainly before the destruction of Jerusalem, by the Hermas spoken of in Romans, xvi. 14.,—a book in such esteem among the early Christians, that it is described by Irenæus

¹ Rev. iii. 5.

² Gal. iii. 19.

³ "*Nuntius autem ille magnificus et bonus Michael est, qui populi hujus habet potestatem et gubernat eos. . . . visitat igitur eos QUIBUS DEDIT LEGEM, si eam custodierunt . . . cognovit autem deinde omnes eos, qui non servaverunt legem, sciens sedem unius cujusque eorum.*"—Hermæ Pastor, Simil. 8.

⁴ "*Mandata Domini custodi, et eris probatus, et scriberis in numero eorum qui custodiunt mandata ejus.*"—Hermæ Pastor, Simil. 5.

as "The Scripture;" by Origen, as "Divinely inspired;" by Jerome and Eusebius, as publicly "read in the churches." The view, then, which supposes "The Open Book" in the hand of this glorious messenger to be the Book of Life in the hand of the great Prince of the Jewish people, is not a conjecture now broached for the first time, but appears to have been that of the earliest, and possibly the most trustworthy commentator on the Apocalypse. I need scarcely point out the marked coincidence between the mighty angel" so gloriously described in the Apocalypse, and the "*magnificent messenger*," or angel, of Hermas Pastor. The object also of his visit, to *write* (in a book) *the number of those who keep the law*, and the people to whom he is sent, defined as those to "*whom the law was given*," are matters too evident to need comment. To say the least of it, the identity is sufficiently close to warrant probability, and to shield from the imputation of rash and visionary conjecture.

This mighty angel is represented in the Apocalypse as "setting his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth," Judæa.¹ In the Book of Hermas he is said to "*visit those to whom he gave the law*," and in the Book of Daniel, with which we are about to compare the Apocalyptic prediction, he is represented as "*standing up for the children of thy people*," the Jews. Here is another point deserving of attention. As the glorious Being whose descent we are considering was essentially the great Prince of the Jewish people, — "*Michael your Prince*,"² so the land and the people he came to visit are declared by Daniel, Hermas, and St. John to be the land and people of Judæa. And, indeed, with a few solitary exceptions, the Jewish people appear to have alone participated in those divine communications made with man by means of angelic intercourse. With the close of that dispensation which

¹ Rev. vii. 1, 2, 3. — "The earth" is three times mentioned in connection with "the sea." In these passages it is clear the land of Judæa only can be intended, for they occur as the sealing of the 144,000 from the twelve tribes. In the passage before us, "the earth and the sea" evidently have the same signification as in Rev. vii., viz. the land of Judæa. When the heaven, the earth, and the sea are spoken of together, creation alone is intended. — Rev. v. 13., Rev. x. 6., Rev. xiv. 7.

² Dan. x. 21.

was "ordained by angels," that intercourse appears entirely to have ceased.

Let us now pass on to inquire, if the prophecy of Daniel, to the consideration of which we are plainly called by the vision itself, will serve to throw any further light upon the prediction of St. John. Not to institute another parallelism between the sacred text, which can be seen by referring to the chapters which introduce this Lecture, I proceed to lay before you the principle features of identity, gathered from a comparison of the prophecy of Daniel with the Apocalypse.

The mighty angel.

Michael the great prince.

His right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth,
Judæa.

Standing up for the children of thy people, *the Jews.*

Clothed with a cloud.

Clothed in linen.

A rainbow upon his head.

His body like the *beryl*.¹

His *face* as it were the *Sun*.

His *face* as the *lightning*.²

His *feet* as *pillars of fire*.

His *feet* like *polished brass*.³

The *Open Book* in his hand.

The *Book* of deliverance.

His *voice* as a lion, or seven thunders.

Like the *voice* of a multitude.⁴

He lifts his hand to heaven.

He lifts his right and his left hand to heaven.

Swears by Him that liveth for ever and ever.

Swears by Him that liveth for ever.

¹ Dan. x. 6.

³ Ibid.

² Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

That at the voice of the seventh angel (*the time of God's wrath upon the Jews*).¹

When he shall have *scattered the power of the holy people, the Jews.*

The mystery of God should be finished.

All these things should be finished.

The temple and the altar.

The daily sacrifice, and the abomination that maketh desolate.

The outer court trodden down by the Gentiles.

The power of the holy people scattered.

The forty and two months.

The time, times, and a half.

The resurrection and the time of the dead that they should be judged.

The resurrection of many that slept in the dust of the earth.

It will not fail to have struck you that there is a near and close resemblance between the prophecy of Daniel and this vision of the Apocalypse; so near and close that all idea of fortuitous and accidental coincidence must be given up as chimerical and absurd. It will also be observed that the identity is of an unusually marked kind, and that the characters and events are so novel and strange as to afford strong presumption that they cannot well be made to refer to different periods. It appears a safe plan to compare the two together, and to see if the truth cannot be extracted from them. Both predictions relate to the same time; the one is but the echo of the other; may the truth result from the investigation!

And before I do so, let me distinctly lay down the time with which this prophecy of Daniel is concerned.

Michael, the Great Prince, is to stand up, and the people that are written in the book are to be delivered, and many

¹ Rev. xi. 18.

that sleep in the dust of the earth are to awake, at a period which is clearly defined. What are the bounds which mark that period? "A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." "The time of the end" — The time "when many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" — The time "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people" — The time "when many shall be purified and made white and tried" — The time when the "wicked shall do wickedly" — The time when "the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up." If ever language distinctly described the period of Jerusalem's downfall, it is the language which has just been quoted. The terms are precisely the same with those used by our Lord :

"There shall be a *time of trouble* such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time."—Dan. xii. 1.

"The *time of the end*, many shall run to and fro, and *knowledge shall be increased*."—Dan. xii. 4.

The time "when he shall have accomplished to *scatter the power of the holy people*."—Dan. xii. 7.

The time "when the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the *abomination that maketh desolate set up*."—Dan. xii. 11.

The time when "many shall be purified, and made white, and *tried*."—Dan. xii. 10.

"Then shall be *great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."—Matt. xxiv. 21.

"This *gospel* of the kingdom shall be *preached* in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then *shall the end come*."—Matt. xxiv. 14.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be *led away captive into all nations*."—Luke, xxi. 24.

"When ye therefore shall see the *abomination of desolation* spoken of by DANIEL¹ THE PROPHET stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judæa flee to the mountains."—Matt. xxiv. 15.

"They shall deliver you up to be *afflicted*, and shall kill you."—Matt. xxiv. 9.

¹ "Consummata enim tentatio, sicut Daniel dicit, adpropinquavit: propter hoc enim Dominus interdidit tempora et dies, ut acceleret dilectus illius ad hereditatem suam."—Barnabæ Epist. iv.

Compare "And except those days *should be shortened* there should no flesh be saved. But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."—Matt. xxiv. 22.

The time "when the wicked shall do wickedly."—Dan. xii. 10.

"Because *iniquity* shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."—Matt. xxiv. 12.

At that time, so unmistakeably defined as the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, "Michael, the great prince, which standeth up for the children of thy people,"—*i. e.* the guardian angel of the Jews,—shall stand up to deliver "every one that shall be found written in the book." A resurrection shall take place; for "many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." This resurrection shall be one of especial glory to the preachers of righteousness; for "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." These preachers of righteousness shall be slain; for "many shall be purified and made white and tried, and the wicked shall do wickedly." But in the "time of the end,"—the time of this "great trouble"—the time of the "scattering of the power of the holy people"—the time of the "taking away the daily sacrifice, and the setting up of the abomination of desolation," "the mystery of God shall be finished," the Jewish dispensation shall close, the elect shall be gathered, and Daniel himself shall "stand in his lot, at the end of the days."

So in the Apocalyptic vision before us, the time to which the vision relates is distinctly laid down. It is the time of the public preaching of the Gospel¹, for St. John is commanded "to prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." It is the "time of the end;"—for which the "sounding of the seventh angel the mystery of God is to be finished." The time of the abomination of desolation being set up in the temple—for the "outer court of the temple is given to the Gentiles, and they shall tread down the holy

¹ Οὐ γὰρ μόνην τὴν ἡγεῖον οἱ θεῖοι ἀπόστολοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν περαιούμενοι, καὶ τὰς νήσους, προσέφερον τοῦ νοερού φωτὸς τὴν ἀκτῖνα. —Theodore.

Παῦλος . . . Κῆρυξ γενόμενος ἐν τε τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει . . . καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἔλθων.—S. Clementis Epist. 1—5.

"It is a singular fact in Church History that during the three centuries which followed the Apostolic age the Gospel was still confined within nearly the same limits which it reached at first."—Rev. J. M. Wilkins, *Early Church History*.

city forty-two months." The time of "trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time"—for "the tenth part of the city fell," that "great city," before specified as the city "where our Lord was crucified." At that time a mighty angel was to come down from heaven, having in his hand an Open Book—at that time the "mystery of God was to be finished," and every one, whose name was found written in the book, delivered—at that time, the Lord's witnesses were to be slain, and after their martyrdom were to be raised again—at that time many that slept in the dust of the earth were to awake, and they that turned many to righteousness were to shine "as the stars for ever and ever."

I am content to leave this identity without further comment. Anything more exact and complete in all its parts could hardly be desired. If Scripture is always the best interpreter of Scripture, then surely this call of the Apocalypse to investigate its meaning by a reference to prophecy has not been made in vain. For let it be carefully noted, that our attention is invited in this symbol to a consideration of prophecy. Whatever is to take place must be in accordance with what "*God hath declared to his servants the prophets*;" and we are directed not so much to prophecy generally as to the twelfth chapter of Daniel particularly, of which much of this vision is the very voice and echo. We turn to that chapter and compare it with the symbol of the Apocalypse, and the result is not merely coincidence and resemblance, but minute and perfect identity. It is found, moreover, to correspond not only in language, but in ideas, and those of a very unique and peculiar kind. I mean such points as those of "The Book," "The Oath," "The Resurrection," and "The Time" of the appearance of the Great Prince and Mighty Angel; defined under the one as—the time of the "taking away of the daily sacrifice,"—"the setting up the abomination that maketh desolate,"—and the "scattering of power of the holy people."—THEN "ALL THESE THINGS SHOULD BE FINISHED." Under the other, as—the time of the sounding of the seventh angel [declared Rev. xi. 18. to be the time of God's wrath upon the Jews]—and the time of the dead that they should be judged.—THEN "THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHOULD BE FINISHED, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Is it too much to say that no other key will fit this lock, and

that this, or something not far from this, *must* have presented itself to the mind of St. John? Is it too much to say that such novel and unheard-of points of resemblance as those which are found to exist in the prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalypse could not by any possibility have been accidentally introduced into the same predictions, had not the one been the echo of the other? Is it too much to say that the mystery of the Open Book is cleared up, and that it need not be referred to "a syllabus of Roman civil and political history," or to "the Bible unclasped by Luther?" But that THERE AND THEN a Mighty Angel and Great Prince stood up for the people of the Jews—that the Open Book in his hand contained the names of those who should be delivered at that time and who should be found written in the book—and that at the "sounding of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God was finished, *as he had declared unto his servants the prophets.*"

And now let us get to a more minute examination of the question under consideration, comparing as we go along the prophecy of Daniel with the Apocalypse.

"And I saw another *mighty angel* come down from heaven, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth"—Judæa.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the *great prince* which standeth up for the children of thy people"—the Jews.—Dan. xii. 1.

This appearance is taken for our Lord by Tichonius, Primasius, Bede, Aretas, Mede, and others; but there are great objections to this interpretation. Our Lord¹ is never called "another mighty angel:" he is described in the Apocalypse as "the Lamb," "the Son of Man," "the Word of God," but he is nowhere called an angel.

¹ The Apocalypse is remarkable for its exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. In no other book of the New Testament are there so many and such complete proofs of his divinity—he is spoken of as "A and Ω, the beginning and the end, the first and the last"—every created being, angel and man, is said to worship him—he claims equal worship with the Father—is set down with Him upon his throne—is, equally with the Father, the glory and the temple of the new and heavenly city—employs the agency of the angelic host to fulfil his will, and is everywhere represented as "so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."—Heb. i. 4.

It would be, also, inconsistent with our notions of our Lord's divinity that he should be represented as lifting up his hand to heaven (in the act of adoration) — "If I have lifted up my hand to any strange god¹," — and "swearing by him that liveth for ever and ever."

Here, then, is a difficulty which is met at once by our system of interpretation. The being is too glorious for an angel, not glorious enough for the Saviour : this seems to favour the idea that the archangel may be intended.

"Clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." — Rev. x. 1.

"A certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz ; his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass." — Dan. x. 5, 6.

This seems to explain the difficulty of this mighty angel coming down from heaven clothed with a cloud — too glorious for an angel, not glorious enough for the Saviour.

Dan. xii. 7., He is called "the man clothed in linen," and in Dan. x. 5, 6. we have a description² of "the man clothed in linen," closely corresponding with the magnificent description of "the mighty angel" in the Apocalypse.

And let me here observe, there is no antecedent improbability why the archangel Michael should not be "the mighty angel, on whose hand is the Open Book." Daniel declared that he should stand up *at this period* for the Jewish people. In the next chapter the archangel is mentioned by name as one of the principal actors in these eventful scenes. In the Book of

¹ "The vizir is also frequently represented elevating his right hand ; *an action apparently denoting an oath or homage*. Dependents are seen in the same posture on monuments of the Achæmenian and Sassanian dynasties." — Layard, vol. ii. chap. 4.

² If it be objected that the man clothed in linen of Dan. x. cannot mean Michael the archangel, because it is afterwards said by him, "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me ;" "there is none that holdeth with me in these things but Michael, your prince ;" it may be answered, that the man Gabriel spoken of Dan. ix. 21., also in Dan. x. 18., is one of the seven presence angels, the elect angels of Tim. v. 21. : the appearance of the prince of the angels would not be inferior to his own.

Hermas it is said of him that he should "*visit those to whom he gave the law*, to see whether they have kept it," and as the law perished with the cessation of the Temple service, the visit spoken of must be confined to this particular time. Our Lord also declared that within the lifetime of the then existing generation he would send his angels "*with a great sound of a trumpet*;" and St. Paul not only thought it possible that some of those to whom he addressed his words would not have died before that archangel's coming, "We shall not *all* sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, or the twinkling of an eye, at the *last trump*¹;" but declared that within the natural term of those whom he evidently supposed "should be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," "The Lord himself should descend from heaven with a shout, *with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God*."² If you add to this strange category of proofs that the time of the archangel's mission is defined by Daniel, Hermas, our Lord, St. Paul, and St. John to be that for which we contend, and that the object of his visit is connected by each with a resurrection of the Jewish people at that period, it will be difficult to resist the impression but that the archangel is so evidently intended in this vision that it cannot with propriety be referred to any other.

Let us go on to speak of the Open Book in the angel's hand.

"And he had in his hand a little book open."—Rev. x. 2.³

"At that time thy people shall be delivered, *every one that shall be found written in the book*."—Dan. xii. 1.

What is this book? We have seen that it cannot mean the Gospel. Is it the Book of Life? It would seem so, for they are to be delivered whose names are found written in the book. The idea is very familiar to the writers of the Scriptures.⁴ Malachi speaks of "a Book of remembrance, written before the

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

² 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16.

³ "βιβλαρίδιον ἀνεωγμένον." Compare "Καὶ βιβλίον ἄλλο ἡνεώχθη, ὃ ἐστὶ τῆς ζωῆς."—Rev. xx. 12.

⁴ The notion of the Book of Life is purely Jewish, founded probably on Dan. xii. 1., which represents Michael, the great Prince of the Jewish nation, as standing up at the close of the national existence of that people, to deliver those who should be found written in the Book,—an idea adopted by St. Paul,

Lord." The Saviour bade the seventy "rejoice because their names were *written* in heaven." St. Paul mentions that the name of "Clement and others of his fellow-labourers are in the Book of Life."¹ He also speaks of "the church of the first-born which are *written* in heaven."² The mention of this book is frequent in the Apocalypse.

"I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life."

"All shall worship the beast whose names are not written in the Book of Life."

"They shall wonder whose names were not written in the Book of Life."

"Another book was opened which is the Book of Life."

"Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life."

"The Lamb's Book of Life."

"I will take his part out of the Book of Life."

By comparing the prophecy of Daniel with the Apocalypse, we come at once to the signification intended. The Open Book is the Book of Life, — the book in which the names of those were recorded who should be delivered at this period—the book containing the names of those who should "awake from the dust of the earth to everlasting joy," who should "shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever." "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white rai-

St. John, and Hermas Pastor. This will be seen by a comparison of Rev. xiii. 8. with Rev. xiii. 9., where "*All that dwell on the earth*," Judæa, "whose names are not written in the Book of Life," are contrasted with "kindreds, tongues, and nations;" i. e. heathen nations. Making it certain that they "that dwell on the earth, whose names are not written in the Book of Life," are Jewish apostates.

This is confirmed, Rev. xvii. 8., where "*They that dwell on the earth*," Judæa, "whose names were not written in the Book of Life," wonder at "the Beast." Now, "the Beast" is only another name for the Roman Power; for the woman sits on "the Beast," and on the "many waters," Rev. xvii. 1., Rev. xvii. 3., and "the waters where the whore sitteth" are defined to be "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," Rev. xvii. 15. Consequently they that wonder at the Beast cannot be heathen nations, but Jews. Now it is said both of those that worship the Beast and of those that wonder at the Beast, that "*their names are not written in the Book of Life*;" hence it follows that "they whose names are not written in the Book of Life" must be of the land and people of Judæa.

¹ Phil. iv. 3.

² Heb. xii. 23.

ment, and *I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life*, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”¹

“And he cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth, and when he had cried, seven thunders (meaning loud thunder) uttered their voices.”
— Rev. x. 3.

“The voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.” — Dan. x. 6.

Was this a characteristic of the archangel's coming? Our Lord said of that time, “He shall send his angels *with a great sound of a trumpet*.” St. Paul² — “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven *with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*.” Contrasting the Jewish economy with the Christian dispensation, he says, “whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised *yet once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven*.” Speaking of the gathering of those who are Christ's at his coming, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment and the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, *for the trumpet shall sound* and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.”

How did St. Paul know that they who should not “all sleep,” i. e. they who “should be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,” should be changed at the *last* trump, except from the Revelation? *It is nowhere else mentioned in Scripture*; only in the Apocalypse is it declared, “In the days of the voice of the seventh angel” — the last trump — the time came “*of the dead that they should be judged*.”³ How came St. Paul to mention the subject of a trumpet at all, if he did not connect it with the notion of the archangel's coming? This equally applies to the expression of our Lord, “he shall send his angels *with a great sound of trumpet*,” — literally, with a trumpet of a loud voice, equivalent to “the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God,”⁴ i. e. a loud trump⁵; and this

¹ Rev. iii. 5.

³ Rev. xi. 18.

² 1 Thess. iv.

⁴ 1 Thess. iv. 16.

⁵ The expression “Trump of God,” is simply a Hebraism for a loud trump. Compare “Wrestlings of God” (Gen. xxx. 8.); “A great city unto God” (Jonah iii. 3.); “Harps of God” (Rev. xv. 2.); “Angels of God.”

our Lord unmistakably declared, should take place before that generation had passed away. Tacitus, speaking of that time, says, "A voice more than human was heard."¹ Josephus says, "The priests said that in the first place they felt a quaking *and heard a great noise*, and after that they heard *the sound as of a great multitude* saying, Let us remove hence."

Into the mysterious words uttered by the archangel in a voice like unto seven thunders, it were presumption to inquire; a heathen acknowledged it to be "more than human." The meaning of the voice was known to St. John, and he was about to write, when he heard a voice from heaven saying unto him, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."
—Rev. x. 7.

"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."—Dan. xii. 7.

Here, again, the features of resemblance between the prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalypse are of the most marked kind; making it plain that to whatever events these predictions refer, they must be "double one of another," and that the symbol is the very voice and echo of the ancient prophet. Indeed, the language of the one is the very transcript of the other.

¹ Compare "A great sound of a trumpet" (Matt. xxiv. 31.), "The voice of the archangel and the trump of God" (1 Thess. iv.), "The voice of his words as the voice of a great multitude" (Dan. x. 6.), with "The sound as of a great multitude" of Josephus, and with the "Voice more than human" of Tacitus.

The angel standing upon the sea and upon the earth—Judæa.

The Great Prince which standeth up for the children of thy people—the Jews.

Lifts his hand to heaven.

Holds his right hand and his left hand unto heaven.

Swears by Him that liveth for ever and ever.

Swears by Him that liveth for ever.

That when the seventh angel shall begin to sound.

That when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people.

The mystery of God should be finished.

All these things should be finished.

The parallelism here is so evident, that it is useless to mark particular words in italics, as it will, it is to be hoped, commend itself at once to the reader's mind; and the clue by which this parallelism has been discovered lies in the direction given in the book itself, *that the subject is one with which the writings of the prophets are concerned*. We naturally turn to those writings for an illustration, and what do we find? "A Mighty Angel" is revealed in the vision, and, lo! a "Great Prince" is found to be his antitype. His appearance is described in sublime language as exceedingly glorious, and the picture tallies to a hair's breadth with that of Daniel. He places "his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth," Judæa.—So He is spoken of as "standing up for the children of thy people," the Jews. He holds in his hand an Open Book; the same book is called by the earlier prophet the Book of deliverance. He cries with a voice loud as seven thunders; and his voice is said to be like that of a great multitude. In the words of either prophet, (for so close is the identity that not only the ideas but the language are the same,) he lifts his hand to heaven; swears by him that liveth for ever and ever, that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when the power of the holy people should be scattered, the mystery of God should be finished.¹ I do not see how all

¹ It is worthy of observation, that in Dan. xii. the prophet inquires "How

this is to be got over or explained away. I do not see how we can resolve the appearance of this mighty angel, which was to take place at the time of the scattering of the power of the holy people, and the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate, into an event yet future. I do not see how we can postpone the resurrection which was to take place at that time of trouble to some indefinite and unknown period. I can only say that, if we are at liberty to deal in this manner with the word of God, there can be no great objection to the change of the Mighty Angel into Pope Leo X., or to the transmigration of the spirit which dwelt in so renowned a persecutor into the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apocalyptic vision goes on to say that St. John takes the book out of the angel's hand and eats it, *i. e.* he is made aware of its contents: here he is in marked contrast with his prototype, Daniel. Daniel hears, but understands not,—the vision is yet to him for “a long time,”—the book is not an “Open Book,” as it was in the time of the end, but a book “closed and sealed.” And this seems a good reason why the book in the angel's hand should be called an Open Book,—the words were to be “closed and sealed to the time of the end,” but at the time of the end the book would be no more closed and sealed,—the book would be no more “shut up,” but an “Open Book.” This point of contrast between St. John and Daniel is clearly laid down.

“I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the little book; and he said unto me, Take it and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth

“And I heard but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed

long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” How long before Michael the Great Prince shall stand up, and the resurrection of “many that sleep in the dust of the earth” shall take place? *The whole question is a question of time*, and the answer is, that with the scattering of the power of the holy people “all these things should be finished.” So, in the Apocalypse, *the question is a question of time*. But, as the period called the “time of the end,” has now arrived, the oath is repeated that there shall be no more delay, ὅτι χρόνος οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι, “but in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel” [the time of God's wrath upon the Jews (Rev. xi. 18.)], “*The mystery of God should be finished.*”

sweet as honey ; and I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey ; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."—Rev. x. 9, 10, 11.

unto the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried ; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."—Dan. x. 8, 9, 10.

Daniel heard but understood not, for the words were closed and sealed up unto the time of the end ; St. John heard and understood, for the time of the end had come. In the figurative language of Ezekiel, St. John ate the book — and published its contents, that Christ was coming quickly, and his "reward with him, to give to every man as his work should be." To Daniel "the vision was yet for many days," the things which should "befal his people in the latter days," rose up in the indistinct and uncertain future like a dream. But in the time of the end, the dream became a reality, and the dim future a present fact. Neither is it difficult to understand how the knowledge of that book was both bitter and sweet to St. John : how the names of the wise "who, like himself, should understand," should be in his mouth "sweet as honey," —and the names of the wicked, "who should not understand," should make his belly bitter,"—how, like St. Paul, he should wish himself "accursed from God for his brethren" who were about to perish,—or how they who were "his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of the Lord Jesus at his coming," should be "his glory and his joy."

It is supposed by some that the command given to St. John to "eat the book" and to prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," introduces a fresh subject in the Apocalypse, and is a new revelation to St. John.¹ I

¹ There seems also to be this further reason why St. John, after he had eaten the book, should be commanded to prophesy before "many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," i. e. before those who were not Jews. The Book of deliverance of Daniel included the Jewish people only. "At that time *thy people* shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book." St. John, on the other hand, is to make known the blessings of the resurrection to Gentiles as well as Jews, and to proclaim that "many should come from the east and west, and should sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God."

cannot think so for a moment. If the Apocalypse does not refer from beginning to end to one continuous subject, it must be the most unintelligible book ever written; the endeavours of expositors to apply it to a variety of subjects, and their signal failure, shows how impossible it is to divide a subject which is a perfect whole from beginning to end. Besides which, the prophecy of Daniel, with which we are contrasting this portion of the Apocalypse, shows how inconsistent such a division would be with the principles of the book. I repeat again what I have elsewhere stated, if the Apocalypse be not a perfect and complete prophecy relating, not to a thousand different events, but to one grand story,—the grandest and most sublime in the history of man,—it may be any thing: any chimæra is not too wild to be applied to its teeming allegory, any event not too visionary to find a coincidence in its overflowing symbols. Let us again get back to the comparison of the prophecy of Daniel with the Apocalypse, and see if the continuous character of the identity warrants the view we are taking.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood saying, Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and them that worship therein; but the court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”—Rev. xi. 1, 2.

“It shall be for a time, times, and a half, when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people.”—Dan. xii. 7.

“From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.”—Dan. xii. 11.

It is impossible not to see the identity. In one statement there is a mention of the temple and the altar,—in the other, of the daily sacrifice offered on the altar, and of the abomination that maketh desolate. In the one there is mention made of the “holy city” being trodden under foot; in the other, of the power of the “holy people” being scattered.

In the one, the time is defined to be forty-two months; in the other, the same period of time is given—“a time, times, and a half.”

Surely this is not accident. Such amazing points of coincidence do not tumble down from the sky; they serve to clinch

the argument maintained in this exposition, and to assure me that I am not speaking at random. And let me further observe, what a strong evidence is this in favour of the date of the book. No one can doubt but that the period of Daniel's prophecy is prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, and here we have another prophecy going hand in hand with the prediction of Daniel, for which the same date must, of course, be conceded. How could John measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers, if not one stone of it was left upon another? How could the bodies of the witnesses lie in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, *where also our Lord was crucified*, if Terentius Rufus had passed his ploughshare over the city and the temple. What an awful mystery of blasphemy would that be which St. John utters, when he predicts that the holy city should be trodden under foot forty-two months, knowing all the while that the event had already taken place! What a difficulty to account for the resurrection of the witnesses, at a period subsequent to the coming of Christ, after the angels had gathered the elect!

And what are the views which are opposed to these? The temple of God, we are told, is — the Christian Church. The command to measure the temple of God — the command to Luther and his brother reformers to reform the Church. The leaving out the court without the temple — the excommunication and exclusion of the Romish Church by the Reformers. The reed like unto a rod — the official authority given to Luther and Melancthon by the electors Frederick and John of Saxony. The forty-two months during which the Gentiles should tread down the holy city — 1260 years during which the Romish Church would tread down the faithful in Christendom.

I am sure that to mention this interpretation is to refute it. I shall leave it alone in its glory; merely observing that if millennial views are founded upon links like these (and without a chronological system of interpretation we shall never get to the millennium in 1885), it is just possible that the chain bridge which spans the gulf of nearly 2000 years may be somewhat worn and tender in its interstices.

You will observe that in the passage under consideration, St. John is commanded to “measure the temple of God, the altar, and the worshippers;” “The court which is without the temple,”

he is to "leave out, and not to measure," because it is to be destroyed. There is then a thing to be done, and a thing not to be done; a part to be preserved, and a part to be destroyed. Now the idea of measuring is connected in the Apocalypse with the notion of the site of a new city and temple after the destruction of the old one. So with regard to the New Jerusalem, "he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city . . . and he measured the wall thereof."¹

This is confirmed in Ezekiel xl. and Zachariah ii., where an angel with a measuring line employs it with a view of erecting a new city and temple upon the destruction of the old one. The opposite notion, of not measuring the court of the Gentiles, would mean, of course, that no new city and temple was to be erected upon its site, but that it would be completely destroyed.

It would then appear that a portion of the temple of God, the altar², and the worshippers, was to be preserved, while another portion was to be cast out and trodden under foot. The part to be preserved was measured, with a view of erecting a new and heavenly temple; the part to be destroyed was not measured, but was "given unto the Gentiles," and they shall "tread the holy city under foot forty and two months."

This is the simple idea prevalent throughout the Apocalypse. The city, temple, and nation, is to perish: the elect, the true temple, the worshippers at the spiritual altar, are to be preserved. All is easy, natural, and consistent. The one is to be measured, with a view to its preservation, the other not to be measured, with a view to its destruction. The meaning is very obvious. The "true tabernacle" will yet be thronged by spiritual worshippers, and its altar will abound with the spiritual sacrifices of the Israel of God. The earthly tabernacle, "the pattern of things in the heavens," shall never be rebuilt; it is

¹ Rev. xxi. 15.

² The idea of the elect worshipping in a new and heavenly temple is common in the Apocalypse; for though it is said of the new and heavenly Jerusalem, "I saw no temple therein," meaning that there was no revival of Jewish ceremonies, yet elsewhere it is said, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God," "they shall serve him day and night in his temple." The souls of the martyrs are said to cry from "beneath the altar," and St. Paul says, "we have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." — Heb. xiii. 10.

given up to the Gentiles, “*ἐθνη*,” the Romans, and they “shall tread it under foot forty and two months.”

I proceed now to speak of the literal destruction of the “court without the temple,” which was to be devoted to desolation. In a prophecy like this, indicative of the miseries which should fall upon the Jewish people at the coming of Christ, it would seem an extraordinary omission if all mention of the temple had been overlooked.

Our Lord distinctly foretold its overthrow.

“Your house is left unto you desolate.”¹

“There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.”²

“As some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come in which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.”³

“Jerusalem shall be *trodden down of the Gentiles* until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”⁴

Now, was the court without the temple “given to the Gentiles?” and “Did they tread the holy city under foot?”

The pavement⁵ of this outer court was the scene of a fierce and sanguinary struggle. Josephus mentions the death of a Roman centurion, whose name was Julian, occasioned by the slipping of his shoes, full of iron nails, upon this gory pavement. “There was one Julian, a centurion, of great reputation, both for his strength of body, and the courage of his soul. This man, seeing the Romans give ground (for he stood by Titus at the tower of Antonia), leaped out and put the Jews to flight, and made them retire as far as *the corner of the inner court of the temple*. However, he was himself pursued by fate, for, as he had shoes all full of thick and sharp nails, as had every one of the other soldiers, so when he ran on *the*

¹ Matt. xxiii. 28.

² Matt. xxiv. 2.

³ Luke, xxi. 5, 6.

⁴ “*Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἔσται παρουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν.*”—Luke, xxi. 24. Compare “*Ὅτι ἐδόθη τοῖς ἔθνεσι καὶ τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν παρήσουσι.*”—Rev. xi. 2.

⁵ “Then brought he me into *the outward court*, and lo, there were chambers, and a *pavement* made for the court round about.”—Ezekiel, xl. 17.

⁶ This conflict must have taken place in the outer court.

pavement of the temple, he slipped and fell down on his back with a great noise. The Jews got about him in crowds, and struck at him with their spears and swords on all sides.”¹

Nor was the holy house itself spared. The same historian tells us—“And now, since Cæsar was no way able to restrain the enthusiastic fury of the soldiers, and the fire proceeded on more and more, he went into the holy place of the temple with his commanders, and saw it, with what was in it, which he found to be far superior to what the relations of foreigners contained, and not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it; but as the flame had not yet reached to its inward parts, but was still consuming the rooms that were about the holy house, and Titus, supposing what the fact was, that the house itself might yet be saved, he came in haste and endeavoured to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire, and gave orders to Liberalius the centurion, and one of those spearmen that were about him, to beat the soldiers that were refractory with their staves, and to restrain them; yet were their passions too hard for the regards they had for Cæsar, and the dread they had of him who forbade them; as was their hatred of the Jews, and a certain vehement inclination to fight them, too hard for them also. Moreover, the hope of plunder induced many to go on, as having this opinion, that all the places within were full of money, and as seeing that all round about it was made of gold; and, besides, one of those that ran into the place prevented Cæsar, when he ran so hastily out to restrain the soldiers, and threw the fire upon the hinges of the gate in the dark, whereby the flame burst out from within the holy house immediately, when the commanders retired, and Cæsar with them; and when nobody any longer forbade those that were without to set fire to it, thus was the holy house burnt down without Cæsar’s approbation.”²

The slaughter in the holy house appears to have been prodigious. “Round about the altar lay dead bodies heaped upon one another, and the steps going up to it ran with a great quantity of their blood.” “The ground did nowhere appear visible for the dead bodies that lay on it, but the soldiers went over these heaps of bodies as they ran upon such as fled

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 1.

² Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 5.

from them." And now it was that the multitude of the robbers were thrust out [of the inner court of the temple] by the Romans, and had much ado to get into the outer court and thence into the city." "As for the priests, some of them plucked up from the holy house the spikes that were upon it with their bases, and shot them at the Romans instead of darts, and two of those of eminence among them threw themselves into the fire, and were burnt together with the holy house."¹

Then indeed was the "outer court given to the Gentiles;" then did the "Gentiles tread down the holy city;" then was "the daily sacrifice taken away," and "the abomination of desolation set up;" then was "the power of the holy people scattered;" and a "a time of trouble such as never was since there there was a nation, even to that same time."

The next point of marked coincidence between this prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalypse is, *this desolation was to continue for a specific time*. This time is accurately marked by each.

According to Daniel, the period is "a time, times, and a half," or "a thousand two hundred and ninety days." According to the Apocalypse, the period is "forty and two months," "a thousand two hundred and threescore days." I consider these periods to be identical, and the 1290 days of Jewish or Babylonian reckoning to be equivalent to the 1260 days—the forty-two months—of Roman reckoning mentioned in the Apocalypse.

It is very remarkable, that the periods of time observed in the Apocalypse are the same:—

The Gentiles are to tread the holy city under foot a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The witnesses are to prophesy a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The woman is to be fed in the wilderness a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

She is to be nourished for a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Power is given to the Beast (Rome) to continue a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

There can be little doubt but that these periods all relate to

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

the same events, and that they are identical with the periods of time recorded in Daniel, xii. It is true there is a difference of thirty days between the prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalyptic statement; but this may be owing to the different methods of computing time, Daniel probably using the Babylonian, and St. John the Roman, method.

Now, upon a reference to history, it is found that this was the precise period during which the invasion of Judæa lasted.¹ It is known that Cestius laid siege to Jerusalem in the month of October, A.D. 66; he was defeated, and "this defeat happened on the eighth day of the month Dius (Marchesvan), in the twelfth year of the reign of Nero."² In the spring of the following year Vespasian is sent by Nero. On the eighth day of the month Gorpheus (Elul)³, A.D. 70 (in the middle of Au-

¹ "And thus did Simon get possession of Jerusalem in the third year of the war, in the month Zanthicus." — Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 9.

"This was on the 17th day of Thamuz, or July, A. D. 70, when, according to the prediction of Daniel, "In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease;" that is, after a time, times, and a half, these were to cease; which exactly happened; for, from February, A. D. 67, when the war commenced under Vespasian, to July A. D. 70, when this occurred, comprehends the assigned space of time." — Archdeacon Wilkins, p. 130.

² Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 19.

³ Josephus says, "as all was burning, came that eighth day of the month Gorpheus (Elul) upon Jerusalem." — Lib. vi. cap. 8. "And thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, on the eighth day of the month Gorpheus (Elul)." — Lib. vi. cap. 10. The daily sacrifice had been taken away on the seventeenth day of the month Panemus (Thamuz); "On that very day, which was the seventeenth day of Panemus (Thamuz), the sacrifice called the daily sacrifice had failed." A comparison of these dates serves to explain a prophecy of Daniel, of which, as yet, I have never seen any interpretation. From the time of the setting up of the abomination of desolation to the taking away of the daily sacrifice was to be 1,290 days; and it is immediately added, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, and three hundred, and five and thirty days." Here is a difference of forty-five days, which remains to be accounted for. It is found that the daily sacrifice failed on the seventeenth day of Panemus (Thamuz), and that Jerusalem fell on the eighth day of Gorpheus (Elul). I have no means of ascertaining the precise length of the Jewish months, or of knowing the way in which time was reckoned during the Babylonish captivity; but, supposing the month to have been a lunar month of twenty-nine days, from the seventeenth of Panemus to the eighth of Gorpheus would be forty-nine days. This approximates to within four days of the period mentioned by Daniel, and it must be remembered we are in ignorance of the precise mode of

gust, A.D. 70), Jerusalem is taken. From the spring of A.D. 67, to August, A.D. 70, is somewhere near the time, times, and a half,—the forty-two months, the 1260 days, during which the Gentiles tread down the holy city.

Another circumstance, which serves to establish the length of the Jewish war, is to be found in the history of one of Christ's witnesses, who predicted the woes coming upon Jerusalem. We read of him, that "*four years before the war began*, at a time when the city was in great peace and prosperity, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, began on a sudden to cry aloud, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people.' This cry of his he continued *for seven years and five months*, until the very time when he saw his presage fulfilled in earnest *in our siege*." ¹

Observe, he commences the cry four years before the war began; he continues it for seven years and five months, and the city is *under the siege* when that cry ceases; this gives the period we contend for as the period of the Roman invasion of Judæa.

Here, then, is another extraordinary point of resemblance between the prophecy of Daniel and the predictions of the Apocalypse. It is no accident which makes the one say the "power of the holy people should be scattered" in "a time, times, and a half;"—it is no combination of fortuitous circumstances which furnishes the reply, the "holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months;" ²—it is no chance sug-

reckoning time. But why should they be blessed who waited during the interval between the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the destruction of the city? Your Lord will answer the question for you: "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days*," "*In those days after that tribulation*," "he shall send his angels and gather his elect;" "In your *patience* possess ye your souls;" "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the *patient waiting* for Christ."—2 Thess. iii. 5.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

² Should it be objected, that the holy city and not Judæa is to be trodden under foot for forty-two months, it must be remembered, that in the parallel passage of Daniel the holy city is called "the power of the holy people;" besides which, nothing is more common than that the metropolis should be often put for the whole country.

gestion which prompts the declaration, that from the setting up of the abomination which maketh desolate to the taking away of the daily sacrifice should be 1,290 days ;—it is not a leap in the dark which supplies the rejoinder, “ the outer court shall be given to the Gentiles ” for the same period.

No human wisdom dictated the enigmatical prediction, “ Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days,” and no human foresight could have supposed that the elucidation was to be supplied by an adversary. Little did that adversary think, when he recorded the fact, that the daily sacrifice was taken away on the seventeenth day of the month Thamuz, and that the city fell on the eighth day of the month Elul, that he was supplying the solution to the mysterious time of Christ’s second coming. The power of the holy people is scattered in that time of trouble of 1,290 days,—the daily sacrifice is taken away, still no blessing comes to the faithful, — forty-five more days have they to wait, until Jerusalem settles down in flaming fire, and the time for the manifestation of the sons of God is come. “ *Immediately after the tribulation of those days* ” — “ *In those days after that tribulation* ” — they see his chariot wheels, and the armies of heaven following the Son of Man. “ Blessed is he that *waiteth* and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days.” Blessed they who “ *wait* for the Son from heaven.” Blessed they who, in the days when the Lord brought down the fortress of the high fort of her walls to the ground, even to the dust, could say, “ Lo, this is our God ; we have *waited* for him, and he will save us : this is the Lord ; we have *waited* for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”¹

¹ Isaiah, xxv. 9.

LECTURE XI.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE TWO WITNESSES.

REV. xi. 3—13.

3. And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred, *and* three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.

4. 'These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and

DAN. xii.

1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.'

2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

3. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

6. And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, How long *shall it be* to the end of these wonders?

7. And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters

make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that *it shall be* for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished.

8. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?

9. And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

11. And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

12. Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

13. But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

In the comparison of the prophecy of Daniel with that portion of the Apocalypse which formed the subject of our last Lecture, we noticed many clear points of coincidence. We showed the identity between "Michael the great prince,"—and "The mighty angel who came down from heaven." His superb appearance as "The man clothed with linen,"—and the angel "clothed with a cloud." The "Book of Deliverance,"—and the "Open Book." The book containing the names of the Jewish "people who should be delivered at that time,"—and the angel setting his "right foot on the sea and his left on the earth"—Judæa. "The man clothed in linen . . . holding up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth for ever,"—and "The angel lifting up his hand to heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever."

His voice, "as the sound of a great multitude,"—The angel's voice, "as when a lion roareth," and as "seven thunders uttering their voices." The purport of the oath of the man clothed in linen, that "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished,"—and that of the angel, "That there should be time no longer (no more delay), but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." *And the time when all this was to be done, declared to be the same both in the prophecy of Daniel and in the Apocalypse.* According to Daniel, "The time of the end;"—according to St. John, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound and the mystery of God should be finished." According to Daniel, "The time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away," "the abomination that maketh desolate set up," "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people;"—according to St. John, "When the court without the temple . . . is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."¹ *And the period during which this desolation was to continue, clearly defined under both predictions.* According to Daniel¹, "a time, times, and a half,"—according to St. John, "forty and two months."

Hitherto the identity has been of a most marked kind, affording a presumption that the remainder of the symbol shall correspond with the same prophecy. Let us proceed to institute a few further points of comparison.

¹ "Time, times, and a half" — $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. In Dan. iv. 32., seven times are said to pass over Nebuchadnezzar. — "Seven times shall pass over thee." This is explained by Josephus to mean, *seven years*. "The king saw in his sleep another vision: how he should fall from his dominion, and feed among the wild beasts; and that when he had lived in this manner in the desert *for seven years*, he should recover his dominion again." (Antiq. x. 10.) This shows that "a time," according to Jewish notions, would mean a year, and that the Jews knew nothing of the idea of days being put for years: this is confirmed in Rev. xii., where the period of time during which the woman is sheltered from the attack of the dragon is first said to be "a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days," and afterwards "time, times, and half a time." The same period is called (Rev. xi. 2.), "Forty and two months."

The witnesses *prophesy*.

Many run to and fro and knowledge is increased.

They prophesy clothed in *sackcloth*, when “the tenth part of the city fell.”

At “a time of *trouble* such as never was since there was a nation.”

When their testimony is finished *they are slain*.

Many are purified and made white (used of the resurrection of the martyrs) and *tried*.

They experience a *resurrection*.

Many that sleep in the dust of the earth *awake*.

Passing by the coincidence between “the witnesses” who should preach or prophesy, and those described by Daniel, who should “run to and fro that knowledge might be increased ;” between the sufferings of these preachers of Christianity who should be “clothed in sackcloth,” or as the same idea is expressed by the elder prophet who should be “tried” by “the wicked who should do wickedly ;” simply calling a passing attention to the very important circumstance, that the time when all this was to be done is accurately defined by each, and declared by St. John to be the time when “The tenth part of the city fell¹, and by his prototype Daniel, as “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ;”—I proceed to direct attention to a still more extraordinary feature introduced in both predictions : it is that of A RESURRECTION at that period. Daniel declares that at this time of trouble, “Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, . . . and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament,” and the echo of St. John is, “The Spirit of life from God entered into them, . . . and they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither, and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.” — The idea is so strange and new, that, like the subject of the Euphrates and Babylon introduced into the same trumpets and vials, it seems impossible it could have found

¹ Rev. xi. 13.

a place in the prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalypse, if the two predictions had not been "double one of another." Added to previous points of coincidence, it assures us that the Apocalyptic vision is the very voice and echo of the predictions of Daniel,—that these prophecies do not relate to separate events but to one continuous subject, and that the time with which both are concerned is one and the same.

But who are these two witnesses? I offer some opinions respecting them: they are supposed to be Moses and Elijah,—the Old and New Testament,—Christ and John the Baptist,—Pope Sylvester and Mena,—Francis and Dominic,—John Huss and Luther,—the Waldenses and the Albigenses.

Dr. Cumming says, they are two distinct lines of witnesses,—the Eastern and Western witnesses. The duration of their prophecy for 1260 days, is—1260 years. The Beast making war upon them,—the persecutions of the Church of Rome. The death of the witnesses,—the extinction of their testimony. Their dead bodies lying in the street of the great city "where our Lord was crucified," and they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations not suffering their bodies to be put into their graves,—the Bohemians, Waldenses, and Wickliffites, summoned to appear at the Lateran council at Rome, A.D. 1513, *and none appearing!!!* The resurrection of the witnesses,—Martin Luther posting his ninety-five theses on the great church of Wittemburg (credat Judæus), in which he asserted Protestant truth, and protested against Romish error. "This was the first sound of the Reformation: the resuscitated witnesses now rose from the tomb, ascended to the sky, were prosperous, dominant, and great, in the presence of all the nations of the earth."¹

I cannot stop to answer this. Ninety-five theses, asserting common sense, and protesting against palpable absurdity, would not be too many vindications of sober reason, to show that a greater mass of incomprehensible hypothesis never entered into the brain of man. The *broad street*, πλατεία, of the city, "where our Lord was crucified," must mean the *Lateran* council on much the same ground that the "voice as when a lion roareth," was made to mean the voice of Pope *Leo X.* I

¹ Apocalyptic Sketches, p. 518.

can see no other possibility of coincidence, except that, *latus, broad*, has somewhat of the same signification as *πλατεία, the broad street*. Neither is it an easy matter to trace the connection between the non-interment of the bodies of the witnesses, and the refusal of the Bohemians, Waldenses, and Wickliffites to appear at the Lateran council of 1513; although, on the supposition that the ninety-five theses were *the posthumous works* of Luther, it is just possible to devise a coincidence between the resurrection of the two witnesses, and the resuscitated placards posted on the door of the great church of Wittenburg. As it is, I find some difficulty in tracing the coincidence between the symbol and the proposed interpretation, and I expect the same difficulty existed in the minds of those to whom this prophecy is supposed to refer. I very much doubt whether Luther was aware that the posting of his ninety-five theses was prefigured by the resurrection of the Two Witnesses or whether the Bohemians, Waldenses and Wickliffites understood that their refusal to appear at the Lateran council was indicated by this denial of the rites of sepulture.

But there is one point of this exposition with which we dare not find any fault. It is that of the Beast making war upon the Witnesses, east and west, right and left, for 1260 years. The Beast *must* be the Papacy: no safe and orthodox system of theology can allow of any other interpretation. Only let us not push the inquiry too far, lest, whilst demanding proofs that the Two Witnesses are eastern and western witnesses, or that the duration of their prophecy for 1260 days, is 1260 years, during the whole of which time this Beast never ceased in his outrageous persecutions, we might be left in the position of the Lateran council with regard to the Bohemian recusants, and might find that there are "none appearing."

To sum it all up, in the words of our opponents somewhat paraphrased, "This was the first *sound* of the Reformation" (*vox et præterea nihil*). "The resuscitated witnesses rose from the tomb" (where, but for their outcry against the Beast, they might have lain till doomsday), "ascended to the sky" (of soft patronage, and gentle favour), "were prosperous, dominant, and great in the presence of all the nations (query, noodles) of the earth."

Let us proceed to analyse the Apocalyptic statement, and to see if persons and events can be found at the date and age of the Apocalypse, to which the whole may be referred : —

It would seem, from an examination of the symbol, that the witnesses must answer to the following particulars. They must be Christian witnesses ; they must be two in number ; they must deliver their predictions under circumstances of great affliction during the period of the Jewish war ; they must be anointed rulers of the Jewish people, like Joshua and Zerubabel ; they must deliver their testimony fearlessly and faithfully, like Moses and Elijah ; when they have finished their testimony they must be slain ; their dead bodies must lie in the broad street of Jerusalem, to be gazed upon by “ the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations,” *i. e.* by nations who are not Jews ; these strangers are to cast out their dead bodies without burial, and “ they that dwell on the earth,” — the Jews, — equally with these foreign nations, are to rejoice at their destruction ; at the same hour there is to be a great earthquake, accompanied with terror and calamity, upon Jerusalem.

It will now remain to be seen if witnesses can be found at that time answering to all these minute particulars.

In a former edition the two witnesses were explained, not of any particular witnesses, but of Christian witnesses generally. Two witnesses being deemed a sufficient number in a Jewish court of law. There always appeared in this exposition a certain degree of indefiniteness, incompatible with the distinctness with which individuals are pointed out in the rest of the prophecy. I may instance the king who leads the locust armies of Rome, — Vespasian or Titus, whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon ; the four kings of the East, Antiochus, Agrippa, Sohemus, and Malehus, loosed from the Euphrates ; the Beast who makes war upon the saints, — Nero. In all these there is a definite allusion to distinct individuals, and it would only be in accordance with previous analogy if we could carry out this principle with regard to the two witnesses, as it seems difficult to understand why only two should be specified, if it was intended to

¹ Matt. xviii. 16., John, xviii. 17., Heb. x. 28.

symbolize a greater number. It will be seen that in the view we now propose to take of the two witnesses, there is a deviation, although not a material one, from the interpretation before given, for we cannot say with our learned adversary that "we have never read anything to make us dissatisfied with the correctness of our interpretations;" daily study and examination of this wonderful book serving to show that we are only touching the elements of truth, which may hereafter, under God's blessing, be expanded into a satisfactory exposition of the whole. Be it remembered, then, that we still desire to explain this symbol of Christian witnesses, only it is suggested that particular witnesses may be intended, and not Christian witnesses generally. Now two such witnesses, corresponding in many minute particulars to the Apocalyptic prediction, do appear at this time in the persons of Ananus and Jesus, the high priests, possibly the last high priests, of the Jewish nation. But before we endeavour to show in what respect these two witnesses fulfil the prophetic description, it will be necessary to meet two principal objections raised against them.

It is said that Ananus could not have been intended, as it was before him that James, the brother of our Lord, was tried, and unjustly condemned to death.¹

The Ananus, who put James to death, is described as of the sect of the Sadducees, "a bold man in his temper, and very insolent." Eusebius says of him that being "rash and daring in his disposition, and being also of the sect of the Sadducees, which are the most unmerciful of all the Jews in the execution of judgment, supposing that he had a suitable opportunity in consequence of the death of Festus, he called an assembly of the judges, and bringing thither the brother of Jesus, who is called Christ, whose name was James, with some others, he presented an accusation against them as if they had violated the law, and committed them to be stoned as criminals."²

Agrippa for this act "took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Jesus, the son of Damneus, high priest." It must then be evident that this Ananus, who was high priest only three months, and who was

¹ Jos. Antiq. xx. 9.

² Eccles. Hist. ii. 23.

then deposed, could not be the same with the Ananus who was slain during the execution of his office as high priest.

Again, our Ananus—who is sometimes called Ananias, and sometimes Ananus—was contemporary with Jesus, the son of Gamaliel: we find him associated in his office with Jesus, the son of Gamala, or Gamaliel, in the life of Josephus, in his Book of Antiquities, and in the Wars of the Jews.¹

This Ananus could not have been the same Ananus who put James to death, for Jesus, the son of Damneus, was made high priest *after* that Ananus, and this Ananus was contemporary with Jesus, the son of Gamaliel, who succeeded Jesus, the son of Damneus.

It is again objected that Ananus and Jesus could not be the two witnesses, because our Lord calls them "*my* witnesses," meaning that they should be Christians, whereas these were zealous Jews.

It is not at all improbable but that Ananus and Jesus were followers of Christ. More than thirty years before this time "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith;"² *at this time* it is particularly mentioned by Eusebius that *there were many of the rulers*³ (ἀρχόντων) *that believed.*" It is no objection to say that they could not be Christians because they were high-priests and zealous Jews; in St. Paul's time there were "many thousands of Jews which believed, and they were all *zealous of the law.*"⁴ Our Lord himself always followed the temple-worship, his apostles went daily into the temple at the hour of prayer. It is recorded of James the Just, who was martyred at the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, that he "alone was allowed to enter the sanctuary," that "he was in the habit of entering

¹ "Ananus, and Jesus the son of Gamala, the high priests."—Life of Jos. 38. "Ananias the high priest cultivated the friendship of Albinus, and of the high priest Jesus."—Antiq. xx. 9. "The best esteemed of the high priests, Jesus the son of Gamala and Ananus the son of Ananus."—Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 3. It is no wonder if there should be some confusion with regard to the name of Ananus, for there was a high priest of this name who had seven sons of the same name who were all high priests.

² Acts, vi. 7.

³ Ananus and Jesus are called "The rulers of the people."—Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 4.

⁴ Acts, xxi. 20.

the temple alone,"¹ and that his knees had become hard as the knees of camels, in consequence of his daily intercession in the temple for the Jewish people. It is also remarkable that Ananus is called by Josephus "*a just man*," a title particularly given to the Christians in those days, a title by which "James the Just" was distinguished.

But the most convincing point of all seems to be, that they appear to have been aware of our Lord's predictions, for they endeavour to dissuade the Jews from going to war with the Romans. "He, Ananus, was thoroughly sensible that the Romans were not to be conquered; he also *foresaw* that of necessity a war would follow, and that unless the Jews made up matters very dexterously *they would be destroyed*."²

"And what occasion is there now for a war with the Romans, *though we should be taken of them*, which may God avert, &c."³ The High Priest Jesus equally endeavours to persuade the people against the war. This seems to show that they believed the predictions of Christ, for, like another of Christ's witnesses who reiterated his predictions at that time, they seem to have known that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation, and to have foretold the approaching desolation. Having replied to these objections, I shall proceed to show in what respect these two witnesses answer to the Apocalyptic prediction.

1. *They are to be two in number.* "I will give," (in the sense of the Hebrew, נָתַן, "I will appoint) my two witnesses." Here the agreement is perfect, *the witnesses are two in number*. It has been shown that there is no improbability why they may not have been Christians. If Josephus is silent respecting the Christian profession of James the Just, of John the Baptist, of the tens of thousands of Jews who believed in Paul's time, and of the "great company of the priests who were obedient to the faith;" nay, if he only cursorily mentions the religion that was then beginning to shake the world, no argument can be drawn from his silence respecting the non-Christian membership of Ananus and Jesus.

¹ Τοῦτω μόνῳ ἐξῆν εἰς τὰ ἅγια εἰσελθεῖν. καὶ μόνος εἰσέρχεται εἰς τὸν ναόν. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

² Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 3.

2. *They are to "prophecy 1260 days clothed in sackcloth."* This may mean that they are to give their testimony during the $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of the Jewish war. It is not intended to be advanced that they actually gave their testimony for that exact time of 1260 days; but that during those memorable 1260 days, they foretold the destruction of the city by the Romans. They are said to prophesy "*clothed in sackcloth*," i. e. to give their testimony under great affliction. Was this the case? "Ananus stood in the midst of them, and casting his eyes frequently at the temple and having a flood of tears in his eyes, said, 'Certainly it had been good for me to die, before I had seen the house of God full of so many abominations, or these sacred places that ought not to be trodden upon at random, filled with the feet of these blood-shedding villains, yet do I, who am clothed with the vestments of the high priesthood, and am called by that most venerable name of (high priest) still live,'"¹ &c. "Many troubles (said Jesus) have fallen upon this city, yet in none of them have I so much wondered at her fortune as now."² These extracts will serve to illustrate the emblem of the Apocalypse that they should prophesy "*clothed in sackcloth*."

3. *They were to be anointed rulers*, "like the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth,"—"The two anointed ones," viz., Joshua the high priest, and Zerubabel, the anointed governor. Here they answer completely to the symbol,—Ananus is called "The ancientest of the high priests;" Jesus, "The best esteemed of the high priests." They both appear to have been singularly good and holy men. "He, Ananus, was on other accounts also a venerable and *very just man*, and besides the grandeur of that nobility, and dignity and honour of which he was possessed, he had been a lover of a kind of parity ever with regard to the meanest of the people. . . . Jesus also was joined with him, and although inferior to him upon the comparison, he was superior to the rest; and I cannot but think that it was because God had doomed the city to destruction, and was resolved to purge his sanctuary by fire, that he cut off these their great defenders and well wishers."³

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 3.

² Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 4.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 5.

4. *They were to deliver their testimony powerfully.* "If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Such were Ananus and Jesus; they were both powerful orators, and earnestly endeavoured to dissuade the people from going to war with the Romans.

"He, Ananus, was a shrewd man in speaking and persuading the people, and had already gotten the mastery of those who opposed his designs, *or were for the war.*"¹

The speeches of Ananus to the Zealots, and that of Jesus to the Idumeans, are recorded at great length, and fully justify the application of this Apocalyptic symbol to them.

5. *They were to be like Moses and Elijah.* "Faithful as Moses over all his house:" and bold as Elijah in reproving vice; or it may mean endued with miraculous powers, such as the early Christians possessed. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters, to turn them to blood; and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will." Nothing can exceed the faithfulness and boldness of these eminent servants of God. In times of overwhelming distress and trouble, they rose up to give their noble and unflinching testimony to the wickedness of the age in which they lived.

"Will you bear?" said Ananus to his countrymen, "to see your sanctuary trampled on? How can we avoid shedding tears when we see those of our own nation plundering our glorious metropolis,—some that have been born in this very country, and brought up in our customs, and called Jews, walking about in the midst of the holy places at the very time when their hands are still warm with the slaughter of their countrymen However it is a right thing, if there should be any danger in the attempt, to die before these holy gates, and to spend our very lives, if not for the sake of our children and wives, yet for God's sake, and for the sake of his sanctuary."² Jesus is equally fearless in his address to the Idumæans: "You may come into this city, and may see the houses that have been depopulated by their rapacious hands,

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5.

² Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 4.

with their wives and families that are in black, mourning for their slaughtered relations ; and this place, which is adored by the habitable world, and honoured by such as only know it by report as far as the ends of the earth, is trampled upon by these wild beasts, born among ourselves.”¹

6. *When they had finished their testimony, they were to be put to death.* “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.”

Hardly is their testimony uttered, when these noble-hearted men,

“Among the faithless faithful only found,”

are put to death. “But the rage of the Idumæans was not satiated by these slaughters ; but they now betook themselves to the city, and plundered every house, and slew every one they met ; and for the other multitude, they esteemed it needless to go on with killing them ; but *they sought for the high priests*, and the generality went with the greatest zeal against them, *and as soon as they caught them they slew them.*”²

7. *Their dead bodies are to lie in the street (πλατεία) of the great city, “where our Lord was crucified,” Jerusalem.* “I should not mistake, if I said that the death of Ananus was the beginning of the destruction of the city, and that from this very day may be dated the overthrow of her wall, and the ruin of her affairs wherein they saw their high priest, and the procurer of their preservation, *slain in the midst of their city* while those that a little before had worn the sacred garments, and had presided over the public worship, and had been esteemed venerable by those that dwelt on the whole habitable earth, when they came into our city, *were cast out naked, and seen to be the food of dogs and wild beasts.*”³

8. “*They of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half.*” It gives great force to this interpretation to find that “they of the

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 4.

² Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 5.

³ Ibid.

people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations,"—the Idumæans, who were not Jews,—did break into Jerusalem on the same night on which Ananus and Jesus were slain, did put to death the two high priests, and suffered their bodies to be "cast out naked." There is no other instance of foreign nations, who were not Jews, breaking into the city during the war until the city was taken by Titus. Nor is it easy to understand how the Romans could look upon the bodies of Christian witnesses lying within the city, from without the walls.

9. "*And shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*"

"Nay they (the Idumæans) proceeded to that degree of impiety *as to cast away their dead bodies without burial*¹, although the Jews used to take so much care of the burial of men, that they took down those that were condemned and crucified, and buried them before the going down of the sun."²

10. "*And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth,*" i. e. the wicked and unrepenting Jews.

"And as soon as they had caught them they slew them, and then standing on their dead bodies, *in way of jest*, upbraided Ananus with his kindness to the people, and Jesus with his speech made to them from the wall."³

11. "*And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand, and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*" "There broke out," says the historian, "a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continual lightnings and terrible thunderings, and

¹ "Father, one of our nation is strangled, and is cast out *in the market-place*, then before I had tasted of any meat . . . I went and made a grave, and buried him." (Tobit, ii. 3, 4. 7.) "And thus it is that we bury all whom the laws condemn to die upon any account whatever."—Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 8.

"Υπέβαλε γοῦν (ὁ διάβολος) Νικήτην . . . ἐντυχεῖν τῷ ἄρχοντι, ὥστε μὴ δοῦναι αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα (Πολυκάρπου) ταφῇ. μή φησιν ἀφέντες τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον, τοῦτον ἀρξῶνται σίβεσθαι."—Eccles. Smyrn. Epist. de S. Polycarp Martyrio, 17.

² Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 5.

amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth that was *in an earthquake*: these things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder, . . . the Idumæans thought that God was angry at their taking arms; Ananus and his party thought that they had conquered without fighting, and that God had acted as a general for them . . . for as the storm was very terrible, Ananus gave the guards in the cloisters leave to go to sleep, while it came into the heads of the zealots to make use of the saws belonging to the temple to cut the bars of the gates to pieces. The noise of the wind, and that not inferior sound of the thunder, did here also conspire with their designs, that the noise of the saws was not heard by the others . . . so they made use of their saws, and opened that gate which was over against the Idumæans, . . . the zealots joined in the shouts raised by the Idumæans, and the storm itself rendered the cry more terrible, nor did the Idumæans spare anybody, for they are naturally a most barbarous and bloody nation; nor was there any place for flight, nor any hope for preservation, but as they were driven one upon another in heaps, so they were slain . . . and now the outer temple was all of it overflowed with blood, and that day, as it came on, *saw 8500 dead bodies there.*"¹

It will be seen there is a minuteness of agreement between the prophecy and its fulfilment more close, perhaps, than we are able to discover between any other prediction of this book and its accomplishment. It is difficult to account for this exactness, if the two witnesses spoken of are not the subject of this prophecy.

It will also be noticed that the subject of the two witnesses is introduced in the Apocalypse synchronically with the mention of the temple, of which they appear to have been most zealous defenders; that they seem to have been the last high priests, deserving of the name, for the high priest appointed by the Idumæans, "a man," says Josephus, "who did not even know what the high priesthood meant," can hardly be said to have been high priest at all; and with their expiring office to have lamented the desecrations of the Holy House, and to have foretold the approaching desolation.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5.

The real difficulty of the passage yet remains to be examined. *The two witnesses experience a resurrection.* On the supposition that they were Christian martyrs, there is no greater difficulty about them than about any other witnesses of Christ. They would be as likely to share in the first resurrection as James the Just,—“the faithful *witness* both to Jews and Greeks, that Jesus is Christ”¹, or that other witness who was slain in the act of reiterating the predictions of our Lord. But here all external proof fails; nor ought we now to require the same kind of proof which we have hitherto adduced. A spiritual mystery like the first resurrection is not capable of the same kind of evidence as a demonstrable fact like the destruction of Jerusalem. It would be unreasonable to require the same amount of evidence for the sealing of the elect by the angels as for the capture of Jerusalem by Titus. We do not require this evidence in other scripture, and why should it be demanded here? The first-born are slain in Egypt, for there is not a house in which there is not one dead,—this is positive fact; but the destroying angel is not seen,—this is a spiritual mystery. The dead corpses of the 185,000 are strewed around the walls of Jerusalem, but the angel of the Lord is not visible. Enoch is “translated, that he should not see death,” yet no man witnesses his translation. Elijah is caught up to heaven, and one alone is permitted, as an unusual favour, to witness his ascent. “Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless if thou see me when I am taken from thee it shall be so unto thee, but if not, it shall not be so.”² Paul is “caught up into Paradise,” “whether in the body he could not tell, or whether out of the body he could not tell, God knoweth;” and we do not demand proof of such a mystery. It is enough for us that such statements are revealed in the word of God, and like all other statements involving supernatural agency, we do not deem it necessary to require for them demonstrative proof.

To this it may be added that the resurrection being altogether of a spiritual nature, the bodies raised must be spiritual bodies³,

¹ Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

² 2 Kings, ii. 10.

³ It does not appear that the Jews entertained the gross idea of a corporeal resurrection. The Sadducees denied the resurrection altogether, and said “there is no resurrection, *neither angel nor spirit.*” The Pharisees, however, who appear to have been right upon this point, “*confess both.*” St. Paul

and as such invisible to flesh and blood. To suppose that the resurrection is attended with a breaking open of vaults and

seems to have held opinions similar to those of the Pharisees on the subject of the resurrection. "Men and brethren," he said, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, *of the hope and resurrection of the dead* I am called in question," (Acts, xxiii. 6.) evidently showing that on the great question which divided these two powerful sects, he entertained the same opinions respecting a spiritual and angelic resurrection which that sect had always professed. In answer to the objection, — "How are the dead raised up, and with what *body* do they come?" (1 Cor. xv. 35.) he replies, that as there are different kinds of flesh, so there are also different kinds of bodies, varying not only in material substance, but also in glory, and that the body raised will be essentially different from the body sown — as different as the corruptible is from the incorruptible; the dishonourable from the glorious; the weak from the powerful; the natural from the spiritual; the earthy from the heavenly. Nay, so far from affirming that our present material bodies shall inherit the kingdom of God, he directly denies such a monstrous supposition. "Flesh and blood, — i. e. our present material bodies, — *cannot, οὐ δύναται*, inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption — matter such as circulates in living bodies now — inherit incorruption." But, though he distinctly denies the resurrection of our present vile bodies, he does not lead us to suppose that the resurrection is merely that of viewless spirits; for he says, "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, *and to every seed his own body*," i. e. as barley does not spring from wheat, or wheat from barley, so the living germ will be raised in the likeness of the body sown. In 2 Cor. v. the same apostle tells us that this new and heavenly body awaits the spirit at the period of its dissolution. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, — if the frail tenement of our spirits perish, — *we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*." He represents the Christian as "groaning" in this earthly body, and "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with the house which is from heaven;" and that he considered this change as *immediate upon death* may be gathered from the words — "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, *we are absent from the Lord . . .* we are confident, I say, and willing rather *to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord*." He elsewhere speaks of the flesh being delivered to Satan for destruction, — "that *the spirit* may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5.); and so far from saying that we shall stand in our present material bodies before the judgment-seat of Christ, he declares that "every man must receive *the things done in his body*, — τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος — according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." — 2 Cor. v. 10.

St. Peter seems to have believed that the souls of the disobedient were in "prison," φυλακῇ, and that "the Gospel was preached to them that were dead" — νεκροῖς, i. e. to the souls of the defunct¹, — that they might be judged ac-

¹ In John, v. 25. "the dead," defined verse 28. as "all that are in the graves," are called οἱ νεκροί. St. Peter calls the souls of the defunct by the same term. That νεκρός does not invariably mean a dead corpse, but simply those who have died, is evident from its being put so often in antithesis to the quick. — 2 Tim. iv. 1.; 1 Peter, iv. 5.

mausoleums, as some would have us think, may only be a gross and carnal view of a spiritual mystery. It is not at all necessary

cording to men in the flesh, — i. e. might be judged for the things done in the body, — but live according to God in the spirit" (1 Peter, iv. 5.), evidently making no mention of a corporeal resurrection, but believing that they who "should give account to him who was ready to judge the quick and the dead," would "*live according to God in the spirit.*"

Our Lord in his well-known controversy with the Sadducees on the subject of the woman who had seven husbands, plainly declared, not only that the resurrection *would not be one of flesh and blood*, for "they that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more," but that the resurrection *would be a spiritual one*, "*for they are equal to the angels*, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." (Luke, xx. 27.) Added to which he seems to say that resurrections *had taken place previously to the one which he would effect*. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work . . . as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (John, v. 17. 21.) Besides which we cannot suppose that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom Moses showed at the bush "*that the dead are raised*," ἐγερσονται, and one of whom our Lord in the Parable of Dives and Lazarus represents as in the enjoyment of present felicity, are still waiting for the resurrection, or that Moses and Elias "*who appeared in glory*" need the addition of the vile matter of which our bodies are composed, mine to-day, yours to-morrow, the common property of vegetables, birds, beasts, fishes, earth, air, water, to render them more perfect. Is it unreasonable, for it certainly is not unscriptural, to suppose that as the Saurian reptiles of the antediluvian world could not exist in our present atmosphere, and as man in his present state could not maintain life if lifted only a few miles above this globe, that a new condition of body must be essential for those who shall inherit that everlasting kingdom, and that the materials of which that body may be formed may be unknown as well as invisible to us in our present state? Is it unreasonable, for it certainly is not unscriptural, to "merge, as Bishop Butler evidently did, the doctrine of a resurrection into the idea of immortality, and to lay not so much stress on a particular day of judgment as on a Divine retribution?"

"Has infinite wisdom no material substances within its conception, and within the power of all might, to organise into bodies which may be the material vehicles of spiritual existences except our flesh and blood. Surely reason scouts such an imagination. We are warranted in asserting that St. Paul declares not only that there are different kinds of flesh, (a truth known to all,) but that in God's works there is a still greater variety, and that there are other organised bodies than those composed of flesh and blood." — Plurality of Worlds.

"In the face of this clear knowledge (of the circulation and transformation of matter) how crude, how untrue to nature, how irrational, how misleading, are the views which some have promulgated with regard to the final resurrection of man! As if the same matter which forms our body, when we are laid in the grave, and which after a brief residence there makes its way through

for us to believe that the body will be raised in its present state. Nay it is expressly said, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." It is quite in accordance with scripture that we should believe that the body raised will be a spiritual body, of which the decaying body supplies the germ, as the decaying seed the germ of the future plant. This entirely does away with the idea of crashing sepulchres, and stones rolled away from marble tombs, and of the dead coming out of their graves like Lazarus, "bound hand and foot with grave-clothes." The resurrection of those eight mentioned in the bible is in no way analogous, for theirs was not a resurrection to an endless life, *but a returning once more to frail mortality*. Even our Lord's resurrection fails in one point of comparison, for his body never saw corruption. On the supposition, therefore, that a resurrection took place, it is by no means improbable that such a resurrection was invisible to those who were alive upon earth.¹ But before I enter upon the Scripture proof of a

some nutritive plant into the body of another man, and forms part of his body still when *he* is buried, — as if this matter, neither his nor mine, which has already 'been slave to thousands,' and may be buried with ten thousand bodies more before the resurrection comes, — as if this very matter were meant to form the clothing of the disembodied spirit, when in visible form and sensible identity it shall be raised on the day when 'small and great' appear before the dread tribunal. "The words of the passage,— 'It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,' and of this one,— 'The dead shall be raised incorruptible,' these alone should be sufficient to deter the theological expositor from propounding ideas so gross in regard to the changes we are to undergo at that mysterious time. That which is formed of matter *such as circulates in living beings now*, can neither be a spiritual body, nor free from the changes which are commonly implied by the word corruption." — Chemistry of Common Life, p. 444.

¹ No instances are given in Scripture of spiritual bodies being visible to men except for some great and extraordinary cause. Although the Roman guards were watching around the sepulchre of our Lord, the fact of his rising from the dead escaped their notice. The murderers of Stephen did not see the heavens opened and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. The companions of St. Paul on his way to Damascus saw a light and were afraid, but heard not the voice of Jesus Christ. Nay, the manifestations of spiritual bodies visible to those who were qualified to behold them, appear to have been invisible to those who were not equally qualified. The angelic hosts which surrounded Elisha and his servant on the hill of Dothan, though visible to the prophet, were not seen by his servant till the Lord, at the prophet's prayer,

resurrection at this time, it will be interesting to find *that a resurrection was expected* by Christian writers of that age, who lived before the destruction of Jerusalem, and described *as an event which had already taken place* by those who followed that period.¹

opened the young man's eyes. The fifty young men of the sons of the prophets who go to Jordan for the express purpose of seeing Elijah taken up into heaven, are not permitted to witness his ascent. (2 Kings, ii.) The angel of the Lord "standing in the way" to destroy him, is invisible to Balaam. (Numb. xxii.) None but our Lord's disciples beheld his ascension into heaven. By a select few only was he seen during the forty days that he conversed with them on earth. The terms in which St. Peter alludes to this (Acts, x. 40, 41.), are very remarkable,—“Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us,” —Τοῦτον ὁ Θεός ἤγειρε τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὸν ἐμφανῇ γενέσθαι οὐ παντὶ τῷ λαῷ ἀλλὰ μάρτυσι τοῖς προκεχειροτονημένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἡμῖν, i. e. *he allowed him to be visible only to special witnesses.* It is to this particular manifestation of himself to his disciples and not to the world, that Judas, not Iscariot, alludes, (John, xiv. 22.) “Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world,” —ὅτι ἡμῖν μέλεις ἐμφανίζειν σεαυτὸν, καὶ οὐκὶ τῷ κόσμῳ. So also it is said “Unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation,” —ὁφθήσεται, he shall be seen as in a vision by those who expect him for the purpose of their salvation. (Heb. ix. 28.)

Unless we suppose a special miracle to have been wrought for the purpose, it would have been impossible for mortals living upon earth to have been cognisant of a spiritual mystery like the resurrection, effected “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.”

¹ I would observe that owing to the scantiness of the records of that time we must not expect anything more than a succinct notice of this event. It is remarkable that no Christian writer of that day, except St. Barnabas, has recorded, and that in the briefest manner, the fulfilment of our Lord's prophecies in the destruction of Jerusalem; that we have to wait till the third century for any thing like a connected history of the early Church, and that Eusebius appears to have been chiefly indebted to Josephus for his knowledge of the events of those wonderful days. It is impossible not to be struck with the omission of a hundred points of deep interest of which there is no account whatever. Beyond the controverted account of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul at Rome, and the murder of James the Just at Jerusalem, we have no accredited history, independent of the Scriptures, of what became of the rest of the Apostles. What account have we of the post-history of the mother of our Lord? How little is come down to us of those sayings of our Lord, when for forty days after his resurrection he spake to them of the “things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Soon after the Apostolic age we get into the dreamings of Papias and the spiritual processes of Origen, and become entangled in the net of fragmentary tradition, of which it may be matter of question whether it be more true or false.

Clement¹, who wrote his first epistle *before the destruction of Jerusalem*, speaks of the resurrection as *soon about to happen*, and connects it with the coming of the Lord Jesus to his temple.

“Of a truth quickly and suddenly shall his will be accomplished, the Scripture also bearing witness; for ‘he shall come quickly, and shall not delay; and suddenly the Lord shall come to his temple, and the holy One whom ye expect.’ Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord shows explicitly to us *the resurrection which is soon to take place*, of which He made the Lord Jesus Christ the first-fruits, raising him from the dead.” In another passage², “All the generations from Adam, unto this very day, have passed away; but they who have been made perfect in love, by the grace of God, *occupy the place of the righteous* who shall be made manifest in the visitation, ἐπισκοπῇ, of the kingdom of Christ; for it is written, ‘Enter into the chambers for a little space, till my anger and indignation pass away, and I will remember the good day, *and will raise you up out of your graves.*’ This will suffice to show that Clement, in common with the Apostles, believed the resurrection to be close at hand, connected it with the coming of Christ, (which coming was to take place before the temple was destroyed), and with the manifestation of Christ in his kingdom.

To this testimony of Clement I would add that of Eusebius.³ He is speaking of James the Just, and is saying that, in the days of James, there were certain “sects, which did not believe *either in a resurrection, or that he was coming to give*

¹ “Ἐπ’ ἀληθείας ταχὺ καὶ ἐξαίφνης τελειωθήσεται τὸ βούλημα αὐτοῦ, συνεκίμαρτυροῦσης καὶ τῆς γραφῆς, ὅτι ταχὺ ἔξει καὶ οὐ χρονιεῖ, καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἔξει ὁ Κύριος εἰς τὸν ναὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Ἅγιος ὃν ὑμεῖς προσδόκατε.”

“Κατανοήσωμεν ἀγαπητοὶ πῶς ὁ Δεσπότης ἐπιδείκνυται διηνεκῶς ἡμῖν τὴν μέλλουσαν ἀνάστασιν ἔσεσθαι, ἥς τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ἐποίησατο τὸν Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστήσας.”—S. Clement ad Cor. Epist. i. xxiv.

² “Αἱ γενεαὶ πᾶσαι ὑπὸ Ἀδὰμ ἕως τῆς δε ἡμέρας παρῆλθον, ἀλλ’ οἱ ἐν ἀγάπῃ τελειωθέντες κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ χάριν ἔχουσιν χώρον ἐνσεβῶν· οἱ φανεροῦνται ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Γέγραπται γάρ· Εἰσηλθε εἰς τὰ ταμεῖα μικρὸν ὅσον ἕως οὗ παρέλθῃ ἡ ὀργὴ καὶ θυμὸς μου. καὶ μνησθήσομαι ἡμέρας ἀγαθῆς, καὶ ἀναστήσω ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῶν θηκῶν ὑμῶν.”—S. Clement. ad Cor. i. 50.

³ Eccles. Hist. ii. 23.

to every one according to his works. As many, however, as did believe, did so on account of James ; as there were many, therefore, of the rulers that believed, there arose a tumult among the Jews, scribes, and pharisees, saying that there was danger that the people would now expect Jesus as the Messiah. They came, therefore, together, and said to James, ‘ We entreat thee restrain the people who are led astray after Jesus, as if he were the Christ.’ ‘ And he answered with a loud voice, Why do ye ask me respecting Jesus, the Son of Man? He is now sitting in the heavens, on the right hand of great power, and is about to come,—μέλλει ἔρχεσθαι,—is soon about to come,—in the clouds of heaven.’ ” It will be seen that the coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the judgment, are here said to be synchronical, and that James said that coming should take place *immediately*.

The resurrection having been spoken of by those who lived before the destruction of Jerusalem as an event soon about to take place, it will be satisfactory to find it spoken of after that event as *having already taken place*, and the blest represented as occupying “the place due to them from the Lord.”

Ignatius¹, in a passage which has been applied by some to the saints “coming out of their graves after his crucifixion and appearing unto many,” represents the prophets *as raised from the dead at his appearing*. “The prophets themselves, being his disciples, expected him by the spirit as their master ; and therefore He whom they waited for in righteousness, at his appearing, *raised them from the dead*.” In another place², “He being the door of the Father by which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, *and the apostles, and the Church*, all these enter into the unity of God.”

Polycarp³ expresses his assurance *that the holy apostles*

¹ “Ὁὗ καὶ οἱ προφῆται μαθηταὶ ὄντες, τῷ πνεύματι ὡς διδάσκαλον αὐτὸν προσεδόκουν· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὃν δικαίως ἀνέμενον, πυρὼν ἡγειρεν αὐτοὺς ἐκ νεκρῶν.”—S. Ignatii ad Magnesianos, ix.

² “Αὐτὸς ὢν θύρα τοῦ Πατρὸς δι’ ἧς εἰσέρχονται Ἀβραάμ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακώβ, καὶ οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι, καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία, πάντα ταῦτα, εἰς ἐνότητα θεοῦ.”—St. Ignatii ad Philad. ix.

³ “Πεπεισμένους ὅτι οὗτοι πάντες (Παῦλος, Ἰγνατίος, Ζωσίμος, Ῥούφος, καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἀποστόλοι) οὐκ ἐς κενὸν ἔδραμον, ἀλλ’ ἐν πίστει καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, καὶ ὅτι εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς τοπὸν εἰσι παρὰ τῷ Κυρίῳ, ᾧ καὶ συνεπαθον.”—Polycarp ad Phillipenses, ix.

and martyrs are gone to the place due to them from the Lord," — the place of which he said "I go to prepare a place for you." "Being confident that all these, Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus, and Paul, and the rest of the apostles, have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness, and are gone to the place that was due to them from the Lord, with whom they also suffered."

The Church of Smyrna expresses its conviction that Polycarp, "with the apostles and all just men," *had already received the crown of immortality*. "For having by patience overcome the unjust governor, and so received the crown of immortality, he now rejoicing *with the apostles and all just men*, glorifies God, even the Father, and blesses the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls, and the Governor of our bodies, and the Shepherd of the Catholic Church throughout the world."¹

Cyprian speaks of "*being crowned at once by the Lord*."²

Dionysius describes the martyrs as *assessors with Christ, partakers of his throne, his kingdom, and his judgment*. "But these same martyrs who are *now* sitting with Christ, and are the sharers in his kingdom, and the partners in his judgment, and *who are now judging with him, &c.*"³

Tertullian speaks of his wife as "obeying those whom *she was about to judge*."⁴

Augustine. "*The life which the blessed martyrs now have*, although it cannot be compared with any happiness or enjoyment of this world, is but a slight particle of the promise." If we add to this the thirst for martyrdom⁵ which prevailed in the first ages, associated no doubt with an idea of immediate blessedness, there will remain little doubt but that the early Church expected

¹ Eccles. Smyrn. Epist. de S. Polycarp Martyris, 19.

² Cypr. ad Ant. Ep. iv.

³ Eus. lib. vi. c. 42.

⁴ Tertull. ad Uxorem.

⁵ "Ἐγὼ γράφω ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις, καὶ ἐντέλλομαι πᾶσιν ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐκὼν ὑπὲρ Θεοῦ ἀποθνήσκω ἵνα ὑμεῖς μὴ κωλύσητε. . . . Ἀφετέ με θηρίων εἶναι βορὰν δι' ἧν ἐνέστιν Θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν. Σίτος εἰμι Θεοῦ, καὶ δι' ὀδόντων θηρίων ἀλήθωμαι, ἵνα καθαρὸς ἄρτος εὔρεθῶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ." — S. Ignatii ad Rom. iv.

"Ζῶν γραφὴ ὑμῖν ἱρῶν τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν; ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταυρώται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φλόουλον, ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοὶ ἔσωθέν μοι λέγων· Δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα." [Compare "ἀνάβητε ὦδε," Rev. xi. 12.] Ignat. ad Rom. iv. 7.

an immediate glorification after death, and spoke with confidence of the apostles and martyrs as already perfect and "*gone to the place due to them from the Lord.*"

It will establish this position to find that the liturgies of the Greek Church¹ praise God for *a resurrection which has already*

¹ "For Thou art the ineffable God . . . Thou hast brought us from non-existence into being, and *hast raised again the fallen* (i. e., the dead), and hast not refrained from doing all things until *Thou hast led us up into heaven, and hast bestowed upon us thy kingdom that was to come.* For all these things we give thanks to Thee, and to thy only begotten Son, and to thy Holy Spirit."

"O most mighty King and fellow-ruler with the Father, Who by thine own power hast despoiled Hades, and hast trodden down Death, and hast bound the strong, and *hast raised mankind from the tomb by thy divine power*, and by the glorious splendour of thine ineffable Godhead," &c.

"As of a truth it is right and just to praise Thee . . . whom the heavenly Jerusalem in full assembly,—the Church of the first-born which are written in heaven,—the spirits of just men and prophets,—*the souls of martyrs and apostles, hymn with songs of praise.*"

"Give eternal rest to the souls of the fathers and the brethren *who have already gone to their rest in the faith of Christ.* Be mindful of those forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, holy ones and just, *of every soul of those made perfect in the faith of Christ.*"

"That we, too, may find mercy . . . with all those holy ones of old, who have been acceptable to Thee from generation to generation . . . and with every righteous soul *made perfect in the faith of thy Christ.*"

"Σὺ γὰρ εἰ Θεὸς ἀνέκφραστος . . . σὺ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς παρήγαγες, καὶ παραπεσόντας ἀνέστησας πάλιν, καὶ οὐκ ἀπέστης πάντα ποιῶν, ἕως ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνήγαγες καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν σου ἐχαρίσω τὴν μέλλουσαν. Ὑπὲρ τούτων πάντων εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι καὶ τῷ μονογενεῖ σου Υἱῷ, καὶ τῷ Πνεύματί σου τῷ ἁγίῳ."—Liturg. S. Chrys. Neale, p. 108.

"Ἀναξέ μέγιστε, καὶ τῷ Πατρὶ σύναρχε, ὃ τῷ σῷ κράτει τὸν ἄδην σκυλεύσας, καὶ τὸν θάνατον πατήσας, καὶ τὸν ἰσχυρὸν δεσμεύσας, καὶ τὸν Ἀδὰμ ἐκ ταφοῦ ἀνέστήσας τῇ θεουργικῇ σου δυνάμει καὶ φωτιστικῇ αἴγλῃ τῆς σῆς ἀρρήτου θεότητος," κ.τ.λ.—Liturg. S. Marc. 197.

"Ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀξίον ἐστὶν καὶ δίκαιον . . . σὲ αἰνεῖν . . . ὃν ὑμνοῦσιν Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἡ ἰουδαία καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία προτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, πνεύματα δικαίων καὶ προφητῶν, ψυχαὶ μαρτύρων καὶ ἀποστόλων."—Liturg. S. Jacob. 109.

"Τῶν ἐν πίστει Χριστοῦ προκεκοιμημένων πατέρων τε καὶ ἀδελφῶν τὰς ψυχὰς ἀναπαυσον . . . μνησθεῖς τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος πρωπατέρων, πατέρων, πατριαρχῶν, προφητῶν, ἀποστόλων, μαρτύρων, ὁμολογητῶν, ἐπισκόπων, δασίων δικαίων, παντὸς πνεύματος ἐν πίστει Χριστοῦ τετελειωμένων."—Liturg. S. Marc. 119.

"Ἵνα εὐρωμεν ἔλεον . . . μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος σοι εὐαρεστησάντων κατὰ γενεὰν καὶ γενεὰν . . . καὶ παντὸς πνεύματος δικαίου ἐν πίστει τοῦ Χριστοῦ σοῦ τετελειωμένου."—Liturg. S. Jacob. 135.

taken place, and represent the blest as *already perfect*, exercising a present adoration and enjoying a present felicity.

The Church of Rome by *her invocation of saints and martyrs* evidently recognises the idea of their perfect bliss and happiness. The Church of England partially acknowledges the same doctrine, and represents the souls of them that die in the Lord *already in a state of bliss*. "Almighty God with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are *in joy and felicity*."¹

It would seem, then, that ancient and modern theology alike recognise the idea of *immediate happiness or misery after death*; and we may further add that this feeling is implanted deeply in our very nature, and is to be traced in the principles of every religion, whether true or false, which exists in the world.

I now come to the proof which the Scriptures themselves afford *of a resurrection at the close of the Jewish dispensation*.

My first argument shall be taken from the prophecies of the Old Testament. In the chapter of Daniel with which we have compared this vision of the Apocalypse, there is a plain and distinct mention made of *a resurrection which should take place at the period of the close of the Jewish economy*. The time of this resurrection is defined in such a manner that it is impossible to doubt the exact period referred to by the prophet.

It is called the "Time of the end" — "A time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation unto that same time" — A time when "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" — A time "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people," and when "all these things shall be finished" — A time "when the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up." Now, it might have been possible to have evaded the statement of "The time of the end," by saying it referred to the end of all things, although "The end of the

¹ Burial Service.

world " distinctly means the close of the Jewish dispensation. It might have been possible to have escaped the force of the words, " Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," by referring them to the spread of the Gospel in our own times, although they have a manifest reference to the first promulgation of Christianity before " the end came." But it is altogether impossible to get over the statement of the " scattering of the power of the holy people," of the " daily sacrifice being taken away, and the abomination of desolation being set up." *That must refer to one particular time, and to no other.* And what took place at that particular time? " *At that time* thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book ; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt, and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

To this may be added a contemporaneous prediction of the same prophet in chap. vii., which represents " The judgment set and the books opened," and the " Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven " to receive his everlasting kingdom, at a period clearly defined to be the time of the existence of the great Roman empire. This can be satisfactorily ascertained. The passage occurs in the vision of the four great beasts, which, like the preceding vision of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, is generally allowed to signify the four great empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman, in turn to be succeeded by a new universal empire, the kingdom of Christ." Three of these, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, must be *heathen* empires, and if the fourth—the Roman—be not heathen also, the whole force of the prophecy would be lost, which represents the four great heathen kingdoms succeeded by the universal kingdom of Christ. Here, again, the period of the judgment, and of course of the resurrection, is defined to be the time of " The fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces."¹ The time of the universal

¹ Dan. vii. 23.

dominion attained by the Roman empire, the time agreeing with that precise period, *and no other*, for neither before nor since has the fourth great kingdom “devoured the whole earth and trodden it down and broken it in pieces.” *Then* “the judgment was set, and the books opened.” *Then* “Judgment was given unto the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” *Then* “The kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, was given to the people of the saints of the Most High.”

The next prophecy to which I direct your attention is that contained in the 25th and 26th chapters of Isaiah.

In these chapters we have a glorious promise of a resurrection: “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.”¹ “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”²

Now, when was this resurrection to take place? If you examine the context, you will find it was to happen when the feast of the Gospel should be made to all people—when the promulgation of the Gospel should destroy “the face of the covering cast over all people and the vail that is spread over all nations,”—when Christ should come, and an expectant Church should say, “Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us,”—when Jerusalem should be destroyed, “and the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust,”—when the Lord should “come out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

There is no mistaking the time. There was only one time in the history of the world when all these events happened together; when the Gospel feast was made, and the Gentile darkness was withdrawn, and the fortress of the high fort laid low, and the Lord came out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. Then also did he “swallow

¹ Isaiah, xxv. 8.

² Isaiah, xxvi. 19.

up death in victory ;”—then did he “ wipe away tears from off all faces ;” then, O Judæa, did “ thy dead men live ;” then, “ together with his dead body ¹, did they arise,” and the resurrection chant of jubilee was heard. “ Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust ; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

It is probable that Malachi also intended to refer to the resurrection of the Jewish people at this time, where he describes the Almighty Judge as *making up his jewels*, and sparing them as a man spareth his own son, in the great and terrible day of the Lord.” This is confirmed by the circumstance that a Book of remembrance, like the Book of deliverance of Daniel and the open Book of the Apocalypse, is simultaneously spoken of. “ A Book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, and they shall be mine *in that day when I make up my jewels*, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him for behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven. . . . Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”²

Here, again, the time is strictly defined. It is the time of “ the great and dreadful day of the Lord,” “ the day that should burn as an oven,” and surely the first coming of the Prince of Peace can hardly be called such a day. But the prophecy descends to still greater explicitness—*for that day is to be preceded by the coming of Elijah the Prophet*,—that Elijah of whom our Lord said “ Elias is come already,”—that Elijah who was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children³ who reiterated the prophecy of Malachi respecting the making up of the jewels on that day that should burn as an oven. “ He will thoroughly purge his floor—the Jewish people—

¹ It is not a little remarkable that Isaiah and Daniel should both have recorded their assurance of their own resurrection at this period : “ Go thy way until the end be, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at *the end of the days*,” (Dan. xii. 13.) ; “ Together with my dead body shall they arise,” (Isaiah, xxvi. 19.).

² Mal. iii. and iv.

³ Compare Luke, i. 17.

*and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*¹

If we except the prophecy of Job, in which he connects his own resurrection with the coming of the Redeemer upon earth *in the latter day*—the time of the close of the Mosaic economy, (a passage imperfectly understood, and from which no valid argument can be drawn)—and the prophecy of David respecting the resurrection of Christ, there is no other decided reference to the doctrine of the resurrection in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It is strange that *in them all* the period is defined to be the time for which we plead, and that the unanimous voice of prophecy, indistinct indeed on the question of the mode of the resurrection, (for one great object of the Saviour's mission was to bring "life and immortality to light," and to make that apparent which before was partially obscured,) is nevertheless most distinct and clear with regard to the time when it should take place. And that time is declared to be "The time of trouble upon the Jewish nation, when the power of the holy people should be scattered, and the abomination of desolation set up,"—the time of the fourth great kingdom upon earth,—the time of the Gospel feast and the removing of Gentile darkness,—the time when the fortress of the high fort of Jerusalem should be levelled with the dust,—the time consequent upon the appearing of that prophet whose coming was to precede the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Leaving the argument from prophecy, I shall next proceed to show that our Lord assured his disciples that *they should sit with him in judgment at his coming to close the dispensation.*

This, as we have seen, had already been the subject of prophecy, for Daniel speaks of "*judgment*" being given to the saints of the Most High. It is to this judgment that our Lord refers. "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration², when the Son of man shall sit

¹ Matt. iii. 12.

² The "*παλιγγενεσία*," regeneration, occurs at the period when "*the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory.*"

This is also the period of his coming. "*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then (τότε) shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.*"—Matt. xxv. 31.

in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones *judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"¹ "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones *judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"²

This office of judgment to be given to the saints and to the disciples of our Lord, seems to have been perfectly understood by them. St. Paul alludes to it as a thing well known: "Do ye not know that the saints shall *judge* the world, and if the world shall be *judged* by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? know ye not that we shall *judge* angels; how much more things that pertain to this life."³

It was with reference to this glorious position of assessors with Christ in judgment that the mother of James and John asks for her two sons, that they "may sit the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom." And the Apocalypse unfolds the vision of thrones and judgment, and the assessors with Christ in this work of sovereign power: "I saw thrones, and they sat on them, *and judgment was given unto them* . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."⁴

I ask how is this judgment to be given to the saints of the most High?—how are they to "judge angels," to "judge the world," to "judge the twelve tribes of Israel"—*unless they are partakers of a previous resurrection*. Surely the idea of judging implies a priority and a superiority over the parties judged; or must we resolve this otherwise inexplicable difficulty into the statement, that at the resurrection the saints appear first before the judgment-seat, and then pass at once to the throne and office of judgment?

There is no occasion to create this confusion. Better to believe with the early Church, that there was a previous resurrection—"that they are now sitting with Christ, and are the sharers in his kingdom, and the partners in his judgment, and are now judging with him."

The plain inference is, the coming, the regeneration, the judgment, are synchronical.

¹ Matt. xix. 28.

² Luke, xxii. 28, 29, 30.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

⁴ Rev. xx. 4.

But I hasten to give direct proof from the Gospels that a resurrection took place at the period of the close of the Jewish dispensation. Our Lord's words, as recorded by the three Evangelists, declare, with the utmost distinctness, that there should be at that period a gathering of his elect.

*"Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn . . . and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*¹

*"And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."*²

*"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory; and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption³ draweth nigh."*⁴

There is no doubt as to what these words mean. The Church is universally agreed that they refer to the gathering of "the wheat into his barn," and to his "coming again and receiving his people unto himself." The only difference of opinion is with regard to the time. Now our Lord said, as plainly as it is possible for anything to be said, *that it should be done then.* He positively declared, in language which no ingenuity or sophistry of man can pervert, that he would come ere that generation had passed away, *and that at his coming his angels should gather his elect.* How could "all the tribes of the earth, τῆς γῆς, Judæa,—mourn," if his coming was not local and for a specific object? How could those who should "see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory," see Jerusalem contemporaneously "compassed with armies," if that coming was not restricted to a particular nation? Nay, how could they "see all these things," how could they "look up and lift up their heads," how could these events be "*near, even at the doors,*" how could "*the kingdom of God be nigh at hand;*"

¹ Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.

² Mark, xiii. 27.

³ Observe the redemption spoken of by St. Luke is equivalent to the gathering of the elect by the angels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. St. Paul will tell us what that "redemption" means. "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." — Rom. viii. 23.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 27, 28.

how could it be said to them "Take heed to *yourselves*, lest at any time *your* hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon *you* unawares,"¹ if that day referred to some future time in which the men of that generation were not concerned?

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that he came *then*, and if he came then, he also gathered his elect at the same time. Besides what argument can be advanced to show that there is a greater necessity for this blessedness to be given *now* than *then*. What more stringent reason exists why the resurrection should take place in our day than in the times for which we contend. Which of the forerunning signs spoken of by our Lord is more clearly fulfilled now than in the day in which our Lord said they should take place? Is Jerusalem now compassed with armies? Is the abomination that maketh desolate now set up? Do false prophets show signs and wonders, deceiving, if it were possible, even the very elect? Does that great tribulation now exist? Do miraculous prodigies herald in the coming of the Son of Man? Is the voice of the Archangel's trumpet heard, and do myriads of angels line the sky? If words mean anything, these things were seen and done at that period, and therefore cannot be done again. "When ye shall SEE all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors; verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass *till all these things be fulfilled*."²

Added to this our Lord declared the period of the resurrection to be *close at hand*, and that too in a passage in which he asserted equal ability with the Father to raise the dead: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, *the hour is coming*, AND NOW IS³, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this, for *the hour is coming* in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."⁴

He declared that at "the end of *this* world," — συντελεία τοῦ

¹ Luke, xxi. 34.

² Matt. xxiv. 33, 34.

³ καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, — used only of events *soon* about to happen. Compare Ἄλλ' ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν. — John, iv. 23. It is remarkable that this phrase is only used twice by St. John, and that, in both cases, it refers to the period of the abrogation of the temple worship.

⁴ John, v. 25—28.

αἰῶνος τουτοῦ, — where the use of the demonstrative pronoun makes it certain that the close of that age must be intended, “The Son of Man shall send forth his angels. . . . *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*”¹ He continually speaks of an immediate blessedness which he would bestow upon his disciples: “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me,” — this kingdom being evidently the peculiar blessedness of those *who continued with him in his temptations.* So again, — “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am;” and that this relates primarily to them is made certain from the preceding clause — “None of them is lost, but the son of perdition,”² — Judas. So with all those texts in John vi. in which he said he would raise up those that believed in him at “*the last day,*” — the last day being the period of his coming, and the close of the age.

He positively laid down the time of the resurrection to be *within the lifetime of the generation amongst whom he lived.*

“The Queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment *with the men of this generation,* and condemn them The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment *with this generation,* and shall condemn it;”³ and that the generation spoken of was the generation of men then living upon earth, is most clear from the context — “Even so shall it be also unto *this wicked generation.*”⁴

Everywhere in the New Testament *the Coming, the Resurrection, and the Judgment, are synchronical.*

“*When* the Son of Man shall come in his glory . . . then shall he sit — in judgment — upon the throne of his glory, and before him *shall be gathered all nations;*”⁵ and in the description given of that judgment it is remarkable that the plea put in before that bar, both of the righteous and the wicked, referring palpably to the peculiar difficulties of the Apostolic age, tells unmistakably of the time when that judgment began to be executed.

“The Son of Man shall *come* in the glory of his father with

¹ Matt. xiii. 43.

² John, xvii. 12.

³ Luke, xi. 32.; Matt. xii. 39. 45.

⁴ Matt. xii. 45.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

his angels, *and then he shall reward every man according to his works,*"¹ and it is added that this should take place during the lifetime of that generation; "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Indeed the uniform and continual voice of Scripture is that the Son of Man is coming to "*judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and his kingdom*;" and the time of this appearing is everywhere defined to be within the lifetime of that generation.

And does it not appear highly probable, — since "God who has appointed to all men death did not clearly set forth the judgment after death, until He had revealed, to try men, that redeeming love without which judgment would be unbearable by any child of man;" that as soon as this demonstration of his mercy had been made known, there would remain no hindrance to the immediate execution of that judgment. Does it not carry with it the likelihood of serious and solemn truth, that since "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," the investiture of a supreme executive for the human race would lead to an immediate performance of his office. If otherwise, why did St. Paul say—"The times of this ignorance God winked at; but *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge (*μέλλει κρίνειν*, *he is soon about to judge*) the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."² Nay, does it not appear a most unaccountable circumstance, that the doctrine of the resurrection should have dawned upon the world at that period — that "life and immortality should have been brought to light in the Gospel" — that the doubtings of the Sadducees, "which said there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit," should have been dispelled by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus — that the disciples wherever they went should have preached "Jesus and the Resurrection" — that one of the main points of their teaching should have been that they which had fallen asleep in Christ had not perished, — and that this resurrection should have been again delayed to an

¹ Matt. xvi. 27.² Acts, xvii. 30, 31.

indefinite period. Upon such grounds there appears no particular reason why Christ should have come into the world when he did. The resurrection of the Lord, followed by no resurrection of his people, seems to allow the force of the old objection, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen . . . and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."¹

St. Paul is very explicit upon the question of a resurrection at this time. He gives us the order of the resurrection with regard to *time*. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept; . . . but every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterward (*ἔπειτα*, used only of a short interval of time) they that are Christ's *at his coming*, THEN THE END."²

He connected it with the time of the destruction of the Jewish people. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled *rest with us* when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels."³ He elsewhere associates it with the coming of the Lord Jesus. "When Christ who is *our life* (compare "the last Adam a quickening spirit") shall appear, *then shall ye also appear with him in glory*."⁴ "Looking for *that blessed hope*⁵, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."⁶ "We beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *and by our gathering together unto him*."⁷

The same Apostle elsewhere describes it *as immediately about to take place*. "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, . . . and have hope toward God . . . that there shall be a resurrec-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 12—17.

² 1 Cor. xv. 20—24.

³ 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.

⁴ Col. iii. 4.

⁵ Ἐλπίς, generally used in the New Testament of the resurrection. Προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα" (Titus, ii. 13.). "Ἐλπίδα ζωῆς αἰωνίου" (Tit. iii. 7.). "Τῇ ἐλπίδι χαίρόντες" (Rom. xii. 12.). "Περὶ ἐλπίδος καὶ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν ἐγὼ κρίνομαι" (Acts, xxiii. 6.). "Οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες ἐλπίδα."—1 Thess. iv. 13.

⁶ Titus, ii. 13.

⁷ 2 Thess. ii. 1.

tion,—*ἀνάστασιν μέλλειν ἔσεσθαι*, *that there shall be soon a resurrection*—of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”¹ He “reckons the sufferings of this present time as unworthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed,”—*τὴν μέλλουσιν δόξαν*, *the glory which shall soon be revealed*.²

He thought it so close and near, that he supposed some of those whom he addressed would be alive to witness it. “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, *that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord* shall not prevent them which are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; *then we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.”³

“We shall not *all* sleep (we shall not all have died, some of us will be still alive upon earth), but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at *the last trump* (the seventh angel of the Apocalypse)—for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”⁴

He seems to have been uncertain whether he himself should be quick upon earth or not at the second coming of the Lord. Hence he says, “Who died for us, *that whether we wake or sleep*,—whether quick or dead,—we might live together with him.” (1 Thess. v. 10.)

“We labour that *whether present or absent*, (whether absent from the body and present with the Lord,)—we may be accepted of him.”⁵

So near did the Christians of those days believe the resurrection to be, that some taught, *before the period of the second advent*⁶, that “The resurrection was *past already*”⁷, and overthrew the faith of some.”

¹ Acts, xxiv. 15.

³ 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17.

⁵ 2 Cor. v. 9.

² Rom. viii. 18.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

⁶ 2 Tim. ii. 18.

⁷ Hymenæus and Philetus gave out in St. Paul's day, that the resurrection was “*past already*,”—*ἤδη γεγογένηαι*, had already taken place,—thereby overthrowing the faith of some who had been taught to believe that it would be contemporaneous with Christ's coming. Their error, however, in antici-

So approximate and so impending did they regard "*their gathering together at the coming of their Lord*, that St. Paul besought them by "*The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by their gathering together unto him*, that they should not be shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us *that the day of Christ was at hand*."—ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν¹ ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, that the day of Christ was actually upon them and in the midst of them. For that day, he said, should not come without its forerunning signs. And then he gave them the signs, similar to those already given by the Lord, whereby they might know the time when that day should arrive.

The first sign mentioned by the Apostle is that, "*there should be a falling away first*,"—ἡ ἀποκατασία—THE falling away—the well-known apostacy respecting which the Lord had forewarned his Church.

The next, that before that day came, *Antichrist should be revealed*, "and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." But whoever that Antichrist might be, *it was an Antichrist then opposing the Church*. When St. Paul wrote, that enemy opposed and exalted himself "above all that is called God or that is worshipped." When St. Paul wrote, he was sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The apostle appeals to their knowledge of the facts of the case: "*Ye know* what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time; for the mystery of iniquity *doth already work*, only he *who now letteth* will let until he be taken out of the way." And when that "Man of Sin," that "Son of Perdition," that "Wicked" should be revealed, of whose non-revealing they knew the reason, the Lord should come, and should "consume

pating the time of the resurrection, shows that they not only believed that the resurrection would immediately take place, *but that it would be a spiritual resurrection*; for it is inconceivable that they could have affirmed that a corporeal resurrection, which must have been self-evident, had already taken place.

If they erred, because they anticipated the time of the resurrection, let us take care that we do not fall into the opposite error of postponing an event, the time of which is so accurately defined by our Lord and his apostles.

¹ That this is the force of ἐνέστηκεν may be seen by comparing Rom. viii. 38. with 2 Thess. ii. 2.

him with the spirit of His mouth, *and destroy him with the brightness of his coming.*"¹

This was the resurrection called by St. Peter "*The grace to be brought to us at the revelation (ἀποκαλύψις) of Jesus Christ.*" — "*The lively hope*" promised to those who were "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, *ready to be revealed at the last time.*"² This was the resurrection of which St. John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, *we shall be like him*, for we shall see him as he is."³ It is no wonder, then, that St. Paul should beseech his Thessalonian converts, "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *and by their gathering together (ἐπισυναγωγῇ) unto him.*" It is no wonder that our Lord connected this resurrection with his coming to destroy Jerusalem, — "And, in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, *but gather the wheat into my barn.*"

Thus prepared, we are not surprised to find the doctrine of a resurrection at this time distinctly laid down in the Apocalypse; on the contrary, there would seem to be a peculiar reason for greater explicitness as the time drew nigh. The dawning of the resurrection morning was at hand, the time for the mystery of God to be finished, the hour for which saints and prophets waited was drawing near. "The day was approaching." "The times of refreshing" (ἀναψύξεως)⁴ — of a new and glorified existence, — were about to come "from the presence of the Lord," when he should "send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto them, whom the heaven must receive *until the times of restitution of all things.*"⁵ The whole

¹ 2 Thess. ii.

² 1 Peter, i. 5.

³ 1 John, iii. 2.

⁴ "ἐξεψύξε," "he gave up the ghost." — Acts, v. 5. "ἀναψύξις," "refocillation." — Schleusner.

⁵ "The times of restitution of all things" (Acts, iii. 21.), χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων, are identical with "the time of reformation," καιροῦ διορθώσεως of Heb. ix. 10. The Jewish law and customs were to last until "the time of reformation," and the "heavens were to receive Christ until the times of the restitution of all things." The inference is, that he would come at the period of the abrogation of the Mosaic law.

previous history of the Church all pointed to this close. Daniel, Isaiah, Job, — all they who “died in faith not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off,” — were expecting their reward. The hour was at hand, defined in the Apocalypse as the “time of the dead, that they should be judged, *and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great,* and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.” All is pointing to a great and speedy consummation — the finishing of the dispensation — the absorbing change of a better and a more glorious age. The grand feature in this new dispensation is the resurrection of the sainted dead; with the resurrection of Christ the first fruits, a glorious harvest follows; the eye of faith may trace them in these Apocalyptic visions, and behold them gathered unto the barns of eternal joy and rest.

Let us then turn over the pages of this key to the great mysteries of God, every word of which is written with almost mathematical precision, and see what confirmation of these views may be obtained from thence.

The witnesses are slain. For 1260 days they had prophesied clothed in sackcloth. What tongue may tell the sufferings of that period? What voice may utter the exquisite character of that affliction, when the ties of nature were lost in the fierce bigotry of persecution — when an apostasy rose up of so dark and horrid a nature, that “brother put the brother to death, and the father the son, and children rose up against their parents, and caused them to be put to death?” No resting-place can be found for their harmless dust — the bitterness of persecution follows them beyond the grave — but the day of triumph is near, the day of victory is at hand; they were faithful unto death, and the crown of life is seen glittering through the sky. “After three days and a half *the Spirit of life from God*¹ entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and

¹ Compare, “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. viii 11.). “Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of your inherit-

great fear fell upon them which saw them, and they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither, and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them."

Everywhere in this wonderful book the same scene is presented. "And I looked, and behold a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads;" they are said to be the "redeemed from the earth," "the redeemed from among men," "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb." "Who are those," asks St. John, "which are arrayed in white robes, and whence come they?" and the answer is given, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore are they before the throne of God." "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or upon their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.* Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."¹

Such are the arguments on which we build the doctrine of a resurrection at that time. It would seem to be no valid argument against a spiritual mystery that the gathering of

ance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Ephes. i. 13.). We "which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23.). "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 16.). Is this any evidence to show that they who were partakers of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit shared in the first resurrection? "Accipiet enim mercedem omne corpus purum ac sine maculâ repertum, in quo habitandi gratiâ constitutus fuerit Spiritus Sanctus."—Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 5.

¹ Rev. xx. 6.

immortal souls into the presence of the God of the spirits of all flesh should be a fact which need not have been visibly manifest to flesh and blood ; neither does it appear necessary for us to be able to define, with minute exactness, the nature of those new and glorious bodies which are suited to their high and heavenly condition. As they cannot be flesh and blood—for corruption cannot inherit incorruption—so we may safely and scripturally believe, that the ever changing matter of our present material bodies is not the stuff which forms the imperishable abode of life and immortality. It would seem to be proved that such of the ancient fathers who lived before the coming of Christ expected an immediate resurrection ; and that such as succeeded to those times spoke of the blest as already gone to the place due to them from the Lord. It would seem also to be made out, with tolerable distinctness, that the prophets who spake of Israel's hope associated the doctrine of a resurrection with the close of the Jewish dispensation, and that our Lord unequivocally, and with the greatest minuteness of time and place, said there should be at that period *a gathering of his elect from the four winds*. This is further confirmed by the writings of the Apostles, and reduced to certainty by the confirmation of the Apocalypse.

It remains with those who are desirous of doing so to disprove these assertions,—to show they are erroneous, and not in strict accordance with the tenor of God's holy word. They are not adopted hastily or lightly ; they do not stand on isolated and solitary texts, neither do they do violence to any essential truth. If they present new and hitherto-unheard-of interpretations of Holy Scripture, their mere novelty entitles them to some consideration. They are based upon the foundation that our Lord came, as he said, to close the Jewish dispensation ; and if he did so come (which I have never yet heard refuted, *and which I confidently assert cannot be refuted*), then he also gathered his elect at the same time.

May they establish us more and more in the faith of the Son of God ! May the consideration of his Almighty power in “quickenings whom he will,” teach us to honour the Son, even as we honour the Father ! May his gathering of his own into his barns of joy and peace induce us to strive and pray that we too may enter into the joy of our Lord ! May the assurance of

their present exalted condition affect us more deeply than the expectation of their future felicity ! May the actual glory shared by the saints now stimulate us more powerfully than the prospect of a glory yet to be revealed ! May we lift up the eye of faith with the martyr of old, till we see Jesus, *not standing alone* at the right hand of God, but the “Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and *with him* a hundred and forty and four thousand ;” and then may we go on from faith to deeds of mercy, holiness, and charity, and so “follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of his heavenly kingdom !”

LECTURE XII.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET AND THE SEVENTH VIAL.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

REV. ix. 15—19.

15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16. And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God.

17. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

SEVENTH VIAL.

REV. xvi. 17—21.

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth so mighty an earthquake, *and so great*.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

The preceding lectures on the subject of the Open Book and the resurrection of the Two Witnesses, seem to be a departure from that synthetical principle upon which we have hitherto conducted the exposition of the trumpets and vials ; and yet, as is common under this duplicate form of symbol, the idea presented in the one is only carried out under a greater variety of costume in the other. Thus, under the trumpet, the prominent notion put forth in the figure of the Open Book and the Two Witnesses is that of a resurrection in the midst of those troublous times. The echo, under the vial, answers, "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, *lest he walk naked and they see his shame.*" And that this metaphor is descriptive of the resurrection is evident, not only from the corresponding charge to the Church of Sardis, where it is associated with the promise of being "written in the Book of Life," but from the earnest desire expressed by St. Paul to partake of this resurrection, and to be clothed with the house which is from heaven, "if so be that being clothed, *he should not be found naked.*"¹ It will be seen that the same idea is exhibited under the trumpet and vial ; the only difference being that the picture faintly sketched in the one is expanded into full and finished proportions in the other.

And here I pause to dwell for a moment on the amalgamation of mercy and judgment, mixed up as it were in strange and unearthly confusion, under the trumpet and vial, which we have last considered. Amidst the mourning of that terrific Armageddon there is an "Open Book" of deliverance. Amidst "the confused noise and the garments rolled in blood," of the "battle of that great day of God Almighty," there is a resurrection blessing to those that "watch and keep their garments."

"Even thus shall it be, (said our Lord,) IN THE DAY WHEN THE SON OF MAN IS REVEALED." "I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed ; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together ; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two men shall be in the field ; the one shall be taken and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where Lord ? And he said unto them whosoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."²

¹ 2 Cor. v. 3.

² Luke, xvii. 30—37.

Nor is this a solitary instance ; not merely in the passage alluded to, but everywhere throughout the book, desolation is combined with deliverance, destruction with preservation, despair with rescue, danger and dread with safety and salvation. Shrieks of agony are mixed up with notes of joy and gladness, and weepings and wailings of intolerable anguish with chants of victory and pæans of conquest. The great city is divided into three parts, but the city of our God abideth ever. Burning Babylon sinks down in masses of lurid flame, but the New Jerusalem shines refulgent with the glory of God. The great whore which corrupted the earth with her fornication is made the "hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird," — but the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is seen coming down from God out of heaven. Hark to the song of jubilee, as it rises high above the wailings of agony ! "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments *and he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*" Hark to the shout of triumph from the lips of the redeemed, as it pierces through the moanings of anguish and the death-groan of the enemies of God ! "Alleluia. Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God . . . and again they said, Alleluia, *and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*"

Our present subject is a comparison of the Seventh and last Trumpet with the Seventh and last Vial. We have now arrived at the consummation, for no other Trumpet is sounded, and no other Vial is poured forth. This is plainly told us in the book itself — for "with the sounding of the voice of the Seventh Angel, *the mystery of God is to be finished,*" and with the pouring out of the Vial by the Seventh Angel, a voice is heard saying, "*It is done.*" There is, if possible, a more distinct and marked identity between the Seventh Trumpet and Vial than the preceding ones, and this identity is preserved and continued to the end of the book. And before we analyse it, suffer me to observe that it is satisfactory to have found this near and close resemblance IN THEM ALL. Had only one differed materially from the rest, it would have been sufficient to overthrow the argument. But as this cannot be urged, the proof amounts to demonstration, not only that the principle of interpretation is correct, but that both Trumpets and Vials relate to

corresponding and contemporaneous events. But I hasten to show the identity between that part of the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial which can be brought under your notice at this time.

Trumpet.—"The *Seventh Angel* sounded."

Vial.—"The *Seventh Angel* poured out his Vial."

T.—"There were *great voices* in heaven."

V.—"There came a *great voice* out of the temple of heaven."

T.—"The *mystery of God* should be finished."¹

V.—A voice is heard saying "*It is done.*"

T.—"And the *temple* of God was opened in *heaven.*"

V.—"And there came a *great voice* out of the *temple* of *heaven.*"

T.—"There were *lightnings*, and *voices*, and *thunderings.*"

V.—"There were *voices*, and *thunders*, and *lightnings.*"

T.—"And an *earthquake.*"

V.—"There was a *great earthquake.*"

T.—"And *great hail.*"

V.—"A *great hail* out of heaven."

Should there still exist a doubt in the minds of any who may examine these views as to the correctness of the principle of interpretation which has been adopted, and should there still be some lurking feeling that the Trumpets and Vials relate to successive chronological events, I trust it will now be completely removed.

As it could not have been accident which introduced the extraordinary mention of the river Euphrates into the same Trumpet and Vial, — as no merely fortuitous coincidence could have placed the subject of Babylon and the coming of Christ under the same duplicate symbols, — as it could not have been chance which directed the woes of the first four Trumpets and Vials to fall upon the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains of waters and the sun, — as no accidental combination of words

¹ Rev. x. 7.

could by any possibility have preserved the continuous identity which is observable in them all, or have caused ideas, *not elsewhere found in the Apocalypse*, to be introduced for the first time in their respective Trumpets and Vials, — as, to use a somewhat homely illustration, it is morally impossible that the pieces of such a Chinese puzzle should have been made to fit each into its proper place, without design and intention, so we may safely conclude that no chance position of words, no accidental similarity of ideas, could have brought about the complete identity between this part of the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial, — we may take it for granted that they both relate to the same events, and that so close an identity cannot be satisfactorily accounted for in any other way. Indeed, the only points of difference are, that with the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet the purport is given of what the great voices in heaven uttered; and under the Vial we have a fuller description of the earthquake and the hail.

I am content to leave this analogy without further comment.

I must now give, although it is becoming a wearisome task to me, the views of those to whom I have already referred.

According to Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming, the period of the Seventh Trumpet is that of the French Revolution, A.D. 1780. The authority for the date is much as usual. I do not think they advance any argument beyond that Alison calls, as he might very naturally, the French Revolution an earthquake. The “lightnings, thunderings, and great hail,” are explained of terrific storms which happened about that time. Dr. Cumming particularly mentions one that took place in July, 1788. The quotation is as follows:—“On Sunday, July 13, 1788, at 9 A.M., without any eclipse, a dreadful darkness overspread *several parts of France*. It was the prelude to such a tempest as is unexampled in the temperate climates of Europe. The soil was converted into a morass, the standing corn was beaten into quagmires, vines broken to pieces, fruit trees demolished, and new unmelted hail lying in heaps, like rocks of solid ice. The hail was composed of enormous solid and angular pieces of ice, weighing from eight to ten ounces; the country people were beaten down in the fields, amid the concussions of the elements, and concluded the last day had arrived: so truly was it fulfilled, ‘there were lightnings, and

thunderings, and a great hail.' The moral and political convulsions presignified by these symbols were no less palpable. Alison says: 'The minds of men were shaken at this time, as by the yawning of the ground during the fury of an earthquake.'"¹

The Seventh Vial poured into the air they pronounce to be the cholera. They infer from this, that not only the physical but the moral atmosphere will be also tainted—"frightful views and notions of Divine truth—strange and awful heresies." The great city divided by the earthquake into three parts is the Romish ecclesiastical system broken up into three kingdoms; and this tripartite division will consist of France leading its hosts on one side, the autocrat of all the Russias leading the second part, England the third part; and "the conflict, when it comes, will be England against the world." The hailstorm will be a northern invasion. Mr. Elliott says France will lead this northern invasion. Dr. Cumming simply asserts there will be a northern invasion. This last is a lucky guess; and had he not asserted previously that England was to *oppose* France and Russia, and that the conflict, when it comes, would be England against the world,—had he not elsewhere laid it down that *England and Russia would combine to prevent the evaporation of Turkey*,—we might think it worth while seriously to examine the foundations on which he builds such an hypothesis. As it is, it is a lame and impotent attempt at penetrating into what is supposed to be the veiled² future. It is a weak endeavour to reconcile the predictions of the Apo-

¹ Apoc. Sketches, p. 329.

² "The folly of interpreters has been to foretel times and things by this prophecy, as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that, after they were fulfilled, they might be interpreted by the event; and his own providence, and not the interpreters, be then manifested thereby to the world." (Sir Isaac Newton, Apoc. ch. i. p. 251.) "Shall I have the reader's pardon if I say that it is my firm opinion that the expositions of this book have done great dis-service to religion; almost every commentator has become a *prophet*—for as soon as he began to explain, he began also to prophesy—and what has been the issue? Disappointment laughed at hope's career, and superficial thinkers have been led to despise and reject prophecy itself."—Dr. Adam Clarke.

calypse with what every statesman in Europe has seen for some time, viz. the probability of some great European struggle. Gréat Babylon coming into remembrance before God is, of course, the speedy downfal of Papal Rome ; and the cities of the nations falling, the recent convulsions in many of the capitals of Europe.

Amidst this mass of confident and airy nothings fix your minds upon one circumstance. I allude to the prediction of the hailstorm which took place on Sunday, July 13th, 1788. Many long intervals of time had previously been past by, during which the Apocalyptic vision lay in a dormant state. Upon one occasion, between the irruption of the Mahometan locusts and the Turkish woe, the one ending A.D. 762, the other commencing A.D. 1063, there is an interval of 301 years, during which the Apocalypse is silent. According to the views of these expositors, nothing took place during that period worthy of being prefigured in the Apocalypse : no Mahometan or Turkish chieftain cut off his horse's tail ; no Bucephalus vomited out horse-balls against the walls of Constantinople ; the world lay asleep like a dormouse between A.D. 762 and A.D. 1063.

It does seem a long time for a chronological history like this to say nothing at all, and to allow ten generations of the great human family to perish without even a word of commiseration. But to me it is not half so strange as to assert that the hailstorm of Sunday, the 13th of July, 1788, was predicted in the Apocalypse.

What ! was there no hailstorm during the 301 years ? Was no corn beaten down, no soil converted into a morass ? And did God's holy and unerring Spirit leave out the history of 301 years, and predict with unfailing accuracy to the seer in Patmos the mention of a particular hailstorm which deluged, on a certain day, *several parts of France* ? If ever there was a deep and glaring insult offered to the all-wise and all-directing Spirit, it is contained in wild and childish hallucinations such as these.

I have yet to learn that the Romish system is or will be broken up into a tripartite division, and that England will form a part of such a system. One would have thought that possibly Austria, Spain, or Portugal, might have been included in

this partition. But, perhaps, Dr. Cumming sees that England is fast becoming Tractarian. I have yet to learn that in the great struggle which is now taking place the contest will be "England against the world." And what becomes of America, and Oceania, and Australia, and Africa, and Asia with its teeming millions, all this time. Is there no other spot but Papal Rome on which the eyes of the universe must be fixed. Is there no other battle-field but that of "broad Europe" which is to decide the coming of the day of God? Are the mighty millions of the human race all to be put aside for the consideration of one branch of the human family? To my mind there is a vein of narrow bigotry running through all such views: there is an intolerance of any other system but our own, which draws a mental film over such judgments. It is the "No Popery" cry which we have shouted till we have become deaf to every other sound. Assail Rome if you will, but assail her with fair weapons—with weapons drawn from the armoury of God, and not fabricated in the smithy of our own clouded and sulphureous thoughts. Burn Great Babylon if you like; but let the sparks of Truth kindle her funeral pyre; do not substitute barren invective for argument, and do not strike her with untempered steel. Every such feeble assault is a victory for the assailed, and removes us still further from the accomplishment of the great cause we ought to cherish above all others,—"Truth," and not England, "against the world."

In explaining this part of the Seventh Trumpet and Vial, I call first your attention to the consummation introduced by each. The number 7, as Josephus tells us, was "a number of dignity"¹ amongst the Jews; and with the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet and the pouring out of the Seventh Vial, it is plain we have arrived at the consummation.

This consummation includes those events which are detailed in the concluding scenes of the book, viz., the destruction of Babylon or Jerusalem, the coming of Christ, the judgment of the quick and dead, and the setting up of the new and glorious kingdom. The time at which we have now arrived is called by Daniel "the time of the end," the time of the scattering

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

of the power of the holy people" — the Jews, — when "*all these things shall be finished.*"

This consummation is plainly recognisable in the Apocalypse.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"In the days of the voice of the *seventh angel* when he shall begin to sound, the *mystery of God* should be finished." — Rev. x. 7.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And the *seventh angel* poured out his vial . . . and there came a great voice, . . . saying, '*It is done.*'" — Rev. xvi. 17.

It is remarkable that this consummation is called the finishing "*of the mystery of God,*" and that with the sounding of the seventh angel, there were great voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Now, by referring to the epistles of St. Paul, we find him speaking of a "Mystery hid from ages and from generations,"¹ "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men,"² "from the beginning of the world hid in God,"³ "which was kept secret since the world began ;"⁴ and he explains this mystery by saying, "*that in the dispensation of the fulness of times (i.e. the period of the close of the Jewish economy), he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth even in him.*"⁵ He declares that this mystery was the admission of the Gentile world unto the hope and promise of the Gospel, and that this mystery was *now* made manifest "to the saints," and to him in particular by especial revelation." "How that by revelation he made known unto me *the mystery* . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now* revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, *that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs* . . . and to make all men see what is *the fellowship of the mystery* . . . to the intent that *now*, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."

¹ Col. i. 26.

² Ephes. iii. 9.

³ Ephes. i. 10.

⁴ Ephes. iii. 5.

⁵ Rom. xvi. 25.

⁶ Ephes. ii. 3—10.

This language of the Apostle is the very echo of the Apocalypse :—

“ In the days of the voice of the seventh angel.”¹

“ In the dispensation of the fulness of times.”²

“ The mystery of God should be finished.”³

“ The mystery . . . *now* made manifest to his saints.”⁴

“ The kingdoms of this world — βασιλεῖαι τοῦ κόσμου — Gentile kingdoms — are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.”⁵

“ He might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

“ That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs.”⁶

It is true, indeed, that preparations for the setting up of this kingdom over the kingdoms of the world were made in the Apostolic age ; but as long as the Jewish temple remained yet standing, the Jewish law was not abolished.⁷ Our Lord and his disciples sedulously attended the temple service ; the early Christians appear to have done the same, and we find even the Apostle of the Gentiles making strenuous efforts to keep the appointed festivals at Jerusalem. Christianity, *then*, was but a graft on Judaism, it being no part of our Lord's intention to sweep away that dispensation before its appointed time. “ Verily I say unto you, *till heaven and earth pass*,—until the visible abolition of the Jewish economy, — one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”⁸

¹ Rev. x. 7.

² Ephes. i. 10.

³ Rev. x. 7.

⁴ Col. i. 26.

⁵ Rev. xi. 15.

⁶ Ephes. i. 10. ; iii. 6.

⁷ Till the Jewish law was abolished, over which the Father presided as king, the reign of the Son could not take place, because the sovereignty of Christ over mankind was that very sovereignty over the Jews *transferred*. — Warburton's Divine Legation, vol. ii. book 4.

“ As God's reign over the Jews entirely ended with the abolition of the temple service, so the reign of Christ in spirit and in truth had *then* its first beginning.” — Ibid.

“ Ῥωμαῖοι τὴν πόλιν ἐλόντες πολιορκίᾳ καθεῖλόν τε τὸ ἱερὸν οὐλμα, καὶ τὸν αὐτόθι ναὸν· λελυτὸ τε αὐτίκα πᾶσα ἡ Μωσέως διαταξίς καὶ τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς περιήρητο διαθήκης.” — Eus. Demonstrat. Evangel. lib. i.

⁸ Matt. v. 18.

But with the time of the consummation, Judaism was to disappear. The only place in which the Jew could offer sacrifice was to be destroyed. Kings and priests were to arise not of the seed of Aaron, nor of the tribe of Levi; God was to be worshipped neither in Jerusalem, nor in Mount Gerizzim, but with the universal homage of every land and of every tongue. Accordingly voices are heard saying, "It is done." "The mystery of God should be finished." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

The time of the setting up of this universal kingdom is next accurately defined. "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."¹ It will be seen that contemporaneous statements similar to those of the Apocalypse are made in the Gospels.

"The *nations* (ἐθνη) were angry."²

"*Nation* (ἐθνος) shall rise against *nation*."³

"And thy *wrath* is come."

"There shall be . . . *wrath* . . . upon this people."⁴

"And *the time* of the *dead*."

"The hour is coming, and now is, when *the dead* shall

¹ Rev. xi. 18.

² This particular time is pointed out by Josephus as a period of universal discord and commotion: "The people of Cæsarea had slain the Jews that were among them, insomuch that in an hour's time above 29,000 Jews were killed, and all Cæsarea emptied of its Jewish inhabitants." "Upon which, the Jews divided themselves into several parties, and laid waste the villages of the Syrians and their neighbouring cities, Philadelphia and Sebonitis, and Gerasa and Pella, and Scythopolis, and after them Gadara and Hippos, and falling upon Gaulonitis, some cities they destroyed there, and some they set on fire, . . . (with many others), . . . and an immense slaughter was made of the men who were caught in them. However, the Syrians were even with the Jews, in the multitude of the men whom they slew . . . so that the disorders in all Syria were terrible, and every city was divided into armies encamped one against another." — Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 18.

³ Matt. xxiv. 7.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 23.

hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”¹

“That they should be *judged*.”

“*Now* is the *judgment* of this world.”²

“That thou shouldest give *reward* unto thy servants.”

“The Son of Man shall come . . . *then* shall he *reward* every man according to his works.”³

“To the *prophets* and the *saints*.”

“A *prophet's* reward . . . a *righteous man's* reward.”⁴

“And shouldest *destroy* them which destroy the earth”⁵—
Judæa.

“He sent forth his armies and *destroyed* those murderers.”⁶

It is impossible not to see that great spiritual mysteries are here mixed up with literal facts—for instance, “The time of the dead that they should be judged” is said to be contemporaneous with the time when “the nations were angry,” and the Jews should be destroyed. So in the Gospels, the coming of the Son of Man to judge the quick and dead is the time when “nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” *Then*, in that generation, ere some of those who heard the words, had tasted of death, they should see Him coming with his holy angels, *to reward every man according to his works*. Account for it as we may, the stubborn fact remains the same, that in the prophecies of the Old Testament, in the

¹ John, v. 25.

² Ibid. xii. 31.

³ Matt. xvi. 27.

⁴ Matt. x. 41.

⁵ This is a remarkable expression. The Jews of those days fairly earned the title of suicides. Titus reproached them for so doing. “Like madmen, after a violent and inconsiderate manner, ye have brought your people, your city, and your holy house to destruction.” (Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 6.) “By their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed.” (Ibid. lib. v. cap. 13.) “I venture to affirm that the sedition destroyed the city, and the Romans destroyed the sedition.” (Lib. v. cap. 6.) “Accordingly it appears to me that the misfortunes of all men from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to those of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were, while the authors of them were not foreigners neither.” — Preface to Wars of the Jews, iv.

⁶ Matt. xxii. 7.

Gospels, and Epistles, in the Apocalypse, and *everywhere in Scripture*, the coming, the resurrection, and the judgment are synchronical. The time of the accomplishment of one of these events it is beyond the power of logic to controvert, or of sophistry to evade. The doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Divinity of Christ, the Personality of the Holy Ghost, are not supported by a fractional part of the complete and magnificent proof which can be adduced for the time of the second coming of the Lord Jesus; and if we will be guided by the voice of Scripture rather than by the opinions of men, we must come to the conclusion that a resurrection and a judgment, which from the nature of the case it is as impossible to prove as to deny, were contemporaneous with that coming. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Why put the objection of the scoffer of St. Paul's time in your own mouth, "How are the dead raised up, and with *what body* do they come?" Why should a resurrection, *certainly not of flesh and blood*, be thought a mystery too great for rational belief? Why should "the resurrection and the life" have come into the world, at that period, to shroud up "life and immortality" in deeper than pristine darkness; or why should the assurance of a judgment *close at hand* be then given to mankind, so long before the execution of that office? Why conjure up the idea of a purgatory, Protestant or Papal? Why retrograde into the follies of St. Augustine, who supposed that the life which the blessed martyrs now have is only a small part of the promise? Why suppose that they who are "like" their Lord, for "they shall see Him as He is," must needs have the addition of this vile matter of which our bodies are made to add to their joy and felicity? Why, in defiance of Scripture, resolve all into futurity, because we cannot explain the mode and the manner of the resurrection? Why conceive that these identical bodies which we now have; which the Parsees expose to be devoured by birds and beasts; which the Greeks and the Romans burnt; which some eastern nations cut up in pieces, and throw to the fishes; which cannibals eat, and which Christians shut up in coffins; which have already, before they belonged to us, been parts of men, birds, beasts, fishes, trees, plants, vegetables; and which, when we have done with them, will again be parts of

ever changing material substances, must necessarily rise again in the same corporeal form out of their graves? Scripture says No. Reason confirms the verdict of Scripture. Why should credulity think otherwise?

If this view be correct, and if the resurrection be a resurrection of living souls, clothed with new and glorious bodies formed essentially of materials different from those gross substances with which we now are conversant, then there is no difficulty in reconciling the statement before us, that the time of the dead that they should be "judged" and rewarded, was the time when "the nations were angry," and "the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

As I shall elsewhere enter at some length upon the subject of the kingdom then set up, I shall not here forestall the consideration of it, but shall proceed to comment upon the remaining points of identity between the Trumpet and Vial.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there were seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven . . . and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings . . . and there was a great earthquake . . . and there fell upon men a great hail."

The circumstance ought not to be passed over, that under the vial the great voice comes "*out of the temple of heaven.*" Under the trumpet, "*the temple of God was opened in heaven,* and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament."

All this speaks of revolution, change. The last remnant of Judaism is to be swept away. "The ark of his testament is seen in heaven." It is no more to be confined within the walls of the holy house, but is transferred to the temple above; its laws are no more of local, but of universal obligation; a new covenant, not according to the covenant made with their fathers, is to be made with the house of Israel and of Judah, and "they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest."¹

¹ Heb. viii. 11.

At our Lord's crucifixion, he uttered the words, "It is finished," and the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. When the time came for the consummation of the mystery, a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, says, "It is done,"—the ark of his testament is seen in heaven,—the Jewish temple perishes to its foundations: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."¹

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings."

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings."

As at the introduction of the first dispensation, "there were thunders and lightnings . . . and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud²," so is it, also, with the introduction of the "better covenant which was established upon better promises." This is emblematical of the glory and superiority of the new dispensation over that which had "decayed and waxed old and was ready to vanish away."³

As at the period of the giving of the law from Sinai, God's "voice *then* shook the earth;" so at the period of his appearing and his kingdom, he hath promised, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven, and this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."⁴

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And an earthquake."

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth so mighty an earthquake and so great, and the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the

¹ Heb. ix. 8.

³ Heb. viii. 13.

² Exod. xx. 16.

⁴ Heb. xii. 26, 27.

wine of the fierceness of his wrath.
And every island fled away, and the
mountains were not found."

There is no mention made of any literal earthquake by which Jerusalem was destroyed at this period. Josephus mentions an earthquake in the time of Herod, by which 10,000 men were killed by the fall of houses; he also tells us, that a short time before its destruction, the Idumæans got into the city during a terrible storm accompanied with earthquake, "with continual lightnings and terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth in an earthquake."¹ But I find no particular mention of any earthquake happening during the siege. It may simply refer to the complete and entire destruction of the city, torn up by its roots, dug up to its foundations, not one stone left upon another, as if overthrown by some mighty convulsion of the earth. Such we know was its condition after the siege; it "was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those who dug it up to its foundations, that there was left nothing to make those believe who came thither, that it ever had been inhabited."² He says again, "And where now is *that great city*, the metropolis of the Jewish nation? Where is this city that was believed to have God himself inhabiting therein? It is now demolished to its very foundations. And I cannot but wish that we had all died, before we had seen *that holy city* demolished by the hands of our enemies, or the foundations of our holy temple dug up after so profane a manner."³

And here let me call attention to the fact that a *particular city* is often mentioned in this book.

"*The great city* was divided into three parts."⁴

"*The great city*, where also our Lord was crucified."⁵

"*The holy city* shall they (the Gentiles) tread under foot."⁶

"What city is like unto *this great city*?"⁷

"The winepress was trodden *without the city*."⁸

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 4.

² Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 8.

³ Rev. xi. 8.

⁷ Rev. xviii. 18.

² Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 1.

⁴ Rev. xvi. 19.

⁶ Rev. xi. 2.

⁸ Rev. xiv. 20.

“They compassed the camp of the saints round about, and *the beloved city*.”¹

How came the mention of a city at all, if “the holy city” delineated the reformed church in the time of Luther, and “the great city,” the tripartite division of the Romish ecclesiastical system? Above all, how came this city to be called “that *great city*,” “that *holy city*,” “the *beloved city*.” We can understand that Rome might be styled with propriety “the great city;” but it is not an easy matter to comprehend how she can be called “*the holy city*,”² “*the beloved city*.”

One only city is called “the holy city,” “the beloved city,” in the book of God, and that city ever bears the name of Jerusalem, whether it be Jerusalem on earth, or Jerusalem “coming down from God out of heaven.” One only city is called “*that great city*,” “*that holy city*,” by the historian of those times; and surely the testimony is all-powerful, as it shows in what manner the Jews of those days described their loved Jerusalem. One only city at the time of the writing of the Apocalypse merited the names of Sodom, Egypt, Babylon, and that was the city “where also our Lord was crucified,” and which was trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months. One only city perished in the miserable manner described in the Apocalypse, when “the winepress was trodden *without the city*, and blood came out of the winepress, even to the horse bridles.” One only city at this period was “divided into three parts,” *i. e.* was completely dislocated and broken up; one only city came “in remembrance before God,” and upon her came “all the righteous blood shed upon the earth.”

Corresponding in point of time with the punishment of this great city, “the cities of the nations,—τῶν ἐθνῶν of the Gentiles,—fell.” Our Lord said the same: “There shall be pestilences, and famines, and earthquakes in divers places,” κατὰ τόπους. Was this the case? Suetonius and Tacitus³ speak of

¹ Rev. xx. 9. Compare Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 11.: “Likewise in *the beloved city* he gave me rest, and in *Jerusalem* was my power.”

² Compare “Τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν πατήσουσι,” (Rev. xi. 2.) with “Τότε παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν.” (Matt. iv. 5.)

³ “Multa eo anno prodigia evenēre . . . crebris terræ motibus prorutæ domus.” — Ann. xii. 43.

an earthquake at Rome. Tacitus mentions another at Apamea¹, in the reign of Claudius, which was so destructive that the emperor remitted the tribute of the city for five years; also another at Laodicea² in the reign of Nero. Eusebius in his Chronicle affirms, that three cities of Asia were overthrown by an earthquake at the same time. In the sixty-second year of the Christian æra there was a great earthquake which destroyed Pompeii⁴ and Herculaneum, besides inflicting great injury in the city of Naples. Another additional evidence is here afforded of the date of the Apocalypse; for surely Vienna, and Paris, and Berlin cannot with any propriety be called the cities of the nations, *ἔθνη*. The term can only be applied to cities of heathen nations, such as those that fell contemporaneously with the destruction of Jerusalem.

I have only one more point to notice, and that is the peculiarity of the hail being mentioned both under the Trumpet and Vial.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

“ And great hail.”

SEVENTH VIAL.

“ And there fell upon men a *great hail* out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent⁵; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

¹ “Tributumque Apamiensibus *terre motu* convalsais in quinquennium remissum.” — Ann. xii. 58.

² “Eodem anno ex illustribus Asiæ urbibus, Laodicea *tremore prolapsa*, propriis viribus revaluit.” — Ann. xiv. 27.

³ “In Asia tres urbes *terre motu* conciderunt, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossæ.” — Chr. p. 161.

⁴ “*Ex motu terre* celebre Campaniæ oppidum Pompeii magnâ ex parte proruit.” — Ann. xv. 22. “Pompeios celebrem Campaniæ urbem deessisse *terre motu* audivimus.” — Seneca.

⁵ “The engines that all the legions had prepared for them were admirably contrived; but still more extraordinary ones belonged to the tenth legion. Now, the stones that were cast were of the weight of a talent, and were carried two furlongs and further: the blow they gave was in no way to be sustained. As for the Jews, they watched the coming of the stone, for it was of a white colour, and could therefore not only be perceived by the great noise it made, but could be seen also before it came by its brightness; accordingly, the

It is no more necessary for us to believe that hailstones of the weight of a talent literally came down from heaven, than to believe that a great earthquake violently destroyed the city of Jerusalem. It is quite sufficient for our purpose to remember that hailstones are represented in the Bible as the instruments of God's punishment against his enemies. Thus, in the destruction of the idolatrous Canaanites, it is said, "The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died : they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."¹

And so it was, with regard to the punishment of that evil and adulterous generation. Jews and heathens alike perceived the hand of God in their destruction. It was the hand of God which gathered them together into one city, and smote the whole Jewish nation at a blow.

"It is God himself," said Josephus to his countrymen, "who is bringing on this fire, to purge that city and temple by means of the Romans, and is going to pluck up this city, which is full of your pollutions."²

"We have certainly had God," said Titus, "for our assistant in this war. It was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications."³ "It was God who condemned the whole nation, and turned every course that was intended for their preservation to their destruction." I cannot but suppose," said Josephus to his countrymen, "that God is fled out of his sanctuary, and stands on the side of those against whom you fight ; even a man, if he be but a good man, will fly from an impure house, and do you persuade yourselves that God will abide with you in your iniquities?"⁴

"You are assisted," said Titus, "by God himself—the seditions they have been in, the famine they now endure, the fall of their walls without our engines, what can they all be

watchmen that sat upon the towers gave them notice when the engine was let go, and the stone came from it, and cried out aloud in their own country language — '*The Son cometh.*'" (Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 6.) "*And stones of the weight of a talent* were thrown by the engines that were prepared for that purpose." — Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 7. ; *ibid.* lib. iii. cap. 7. 23.

¹ Joshua, x. 11.

³ *Ibid.* lib. vi. cap. 9.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* lib. v. cap. 9.

but demonstrations of his anger against them, and of his assistance afforded us?"¹

I offer a brief recapitulation of this Trumpet and Vial. They introduce the consummation; the mystery of God is to be finished, and the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Accordingly the temple of God is opened in heaven; within it is the ark of his testament; voices, thunderings, and lightnings shake not only earth but heaven; an earthquake² of tribulation and convulsion overwhelms the holy city; great Babylon comes in remembrance before God; God's judgments descend upon her out of heaven, and men blaspheme God because of these plagues, for they are exceeding great. All this took place at the time for which we contend; not only Jerusalem and the temple, but the dispensation itself, became a wreck; and upon this wreck arose that superb, that everlasting kingdom, stretching away from land to land and from sea to sea, which, like the light and air, is to enfold all nations in its universal embrace, and to cover all nations with its ever increasing shade. No end, no diminution of its glory, no curtailment, no lessening of its grandeur, awaits that kingdom. No new kingdom shall arise on its everlasting foundations—no sceptred monarch, panting after universal dominion—no Alexander—no Napoleon of his time and day—shall shear away one flower from that everlasting wreath, or lop one spray from that great tree enveloping heaven and earth with its eternal boughs.

Thought full of freshness and power, thought full of stability and strength! "The kingdoms of this world *are become* the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Statesmen and politicians, princes and tyrants, may see before them but their own ends and their own purposes—may

¹ "Philostratus tells us, when some of the nearer nations would have crowned Titus for his victories over the Jews, he refused, saying that he deserved nothing upon that account; for it was not his work, but God had made him an instrument of his wrath against that people."—Tillotson's Sermons, p. 186.

² In this earthquake a third part of the city fell, meaning a great and considerable part; under the previous earthquake, of chap. xi., a tenth part only of the city fell.

scheme, and plan, and direct ; but his kingdom ruleth over all—he will make all conducive to the glory of his great name—will make light shine out of darkness—will bring harmony out of chaos, good out of evil, and progress out of the most tangled and intricate web of human affairs.

Storm after storm and convulsion after convulsion—the hurricanes and tornados of popular fury, and the sweeping cataract of the evil passions of men—hailstones, every one of them the weight of a talent, and the earthquakes of nations roused in their might and madness—may dislocate dynasties and thrones, and shake the solid foundations of government and order ; but they cannot spring one arch, they cannot loosen one pillar, they cannot overturn one stone of that heaven-built and eternal kingdom. There is a guiding hand at the helm, which ever says, “Hitherto shalt thou come but no further ;” there is one sitting above the waterflood who is “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The cities of the nations may fall : Constantinople or St. Petersburg, London or Paris, may be engulfed ; but the kingdom of Him who shall reign for ever and ever shall proceed,—the past the pledge of the future, the 2000 years gone by the earnest for the time to come.

“He shall reign for ever and ever.” “Of the increase of his government there shall be no end.” “His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

LECTURE XIII.

THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS.

REV. xii. 1—17.

1. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven ; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars :

2. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3. And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days.

7. And there was war in heaven : Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8. And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12. Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea ! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

BEFORE I attempt an explanation of the subject before us,—a subject which has exercised to the utmost the ingenuity and research of commentators on the Apocalypse,—I proceed to give the views of Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming on this chapter.

The woman clothed with the sun is Christ's true Church. The sun and moon are emblems of civil and political grandeur. The man-child—the symbol of Christian people; and his ruling the nations with a rod of iron—the promised privilege of every believer to rule the nations. The dragon is not Satan [although St. John says he is “that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world”], but the Anti-Christian, persecuting, heathen Roman empire. *The time when the woman brought forth the man-child—the year 313!!!* “The commencement of the woman's gestation was the year 33, the year of our Lord's resurrection, when the Church, properly speaking, became developed. From that period there elapsed, on obvious grounds, the number of 9 prophetic months, or 40 prophetic weeks, or 280 prophetic days; that is, 280 literal years. Adding, then, to the year 33, the 280 literal years, we come down to the year 313, *when the Milan decree was issued*”!!!!¹ The tail of the dragon, drawing a third part of the stars of heaven—the Emperor Maximin vowing to Jupiter, that if he obtained a victory over Licinius, he would abolish the Christian name. The war in heaven—Paganism finally crushed. Satan cast out—the dragon (heathen Rome) deposed from the government of affairs by God's providence. The song of victory—the establishment of Christianity under Constantine. The dragon cast down to the earth—the *Arian*

¹ Apocalyptic Sketches, p. 221.

heresy !!! The two great wings of an eagle—Theodosius the Great protecting the Church, by spreading over her the wings of the empire. The dragon casting water as a flood out of his mouth after the woman—the irruption into Italy of the Visigoths, Vandals, and Huns, *all of whom were Arians !!!* The earth opening her mouth and helping the woman—the *merging of the Arian Goths into the Trinitarian population of Rome !!!*

“Such,” adds Dr. Cumming, “is the *simple*, and, I think, *satisfactory* exposition of the chapter.”

Well; if this is a chronological history of the world and of the Church, of course it is just as easy to go back as to go forward. But I cannot help remembering that the mighty angel of chap. x. was the Reformation, and the Open Book the Bible unclasped by Luther; and now we have gone back from the sixteenth century to the year 313; upon this principle we may have again to go back, as I believe we shall, between this and 1885; and the millennium will have to be put off after all. I am sure I need only observe of the period of the woman's gestation, 280 years, that it is an unusually long one, to say nothing of the assumption of the date 33. But, after the mountains have been in labour for so long a time, we might have expected something more than *the Milan decree* — “*ridiculus mus.*” Dr. Cumming does not tell us how *the Milan decree* “was caught up to God and to his throne, and how it rules the nations with a rod of iron;” nor how the dragon stood for 313 years before the woman whose parturition was so tedious, “to devour her child as soon as it was born.” I must pass over the dragon and his tail, which is converted into an emperor. I do not wonder that he is called Maximin if he does such great things, and I cannot help remarking here that the tails of scorpions and the tail of heathen Rome are, according to Dr. Cumming, unlike any other tails of which I ever heard. I profess I do not see the connection between the protection which Theodosius the Great afforded to the Church, *by spreading over her the wings of the empire*, and the two wings of the great eagle by which the woman flies into the wilderness,—I fear I must have similar wings given to me before I can soar after such airy flights, or mount up so high into the cloud-land of imagination. But the strangest thing of all is, that the

water out of the dragon's mouth should be the irruption of the Visigoths, Vandals, and Huns, into Italy, "*all of whom were Arians*"!!! What! was there not one Visigoth, Vandal, or Hun, impregnated with Trinitarian views? Were they all heretics? Then they deserved to be swallowed up by the "orthodox Romans." I do not wonder that the earth opened her mouth, and merged such Goths into the Trinitarian population of Italy!

I am not surprised to find that Dr. Cumming calls this a *simple* view, although it has somewhat excited my astonishment that any man in his sober senses could pronounce it *satisfactory*. I often wish I had no harder task than exposing the simplicity of such interpretations. What can be clearer than that if the dragon is heathen Rome, the water out of the dragon's mouth must be the *irruption of the Visigoths, Vandals, and Huns into Italy*? One would have thought that out of pure patriotism the dragon would have emitted his water-flood in another direction. What can be more apparent than the heterodoxy of these Vandals, Visigoths, and Huns, "*all of whom were Arians*"!!!—if indeed such Vandals knew what Arianism meant. Or why should we "open our mouths" at this ecclesiastical travestie of the tragedy of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, as a stretch of fancy far more wonderful than anything related by Baron Munchausen or Sinbad the Sailor? Shade of St. Athanasius to the rescue of these barbarians! Show that, forsaking the wild traditions of their Scandinavian ancestors, they fathomed the depths of the Arian heresy, and that disgusted with such false theology, these savage conquerors were merged in the more orthodox creed of Trinitarian doctrine! Show that these hordes of fierce invaders were aware that their miraculous conversion was prefigured in the Apocalypse, and that they interpreted "the earth opening her mouth" of their being swallowed up by the "orthodox Romans;" or else suffer us still to "open our mouths" in utter astonishment at an exposition *so simple and so satisfactory*, and to gulp down and swallow, as best we may, such prodigious theology!

So much for the chronological interpretation of this book. The book itself defies such a method of interpretation; and every attempt shows the futility of such a system. The approximation, if such it can be called, between the dragon cast to the earth and

the Arian heresy—between the earth opening her mouth and the merging of Arian heterodoxy into Trinitarian orthodoxy, with the fact staring us in the face, that out of the history of 2000 years nothing can be found *nearer* to the Apocalyptic symbol—declares the utter fallacy of such a mode of exposition; reveals the impossibility of reversing the chronology laid down by God's Holy Spirit, and of extending over an almost indefinite period what was intended to be comprised within a very limited space. I trust it will be found a powerful argument in support of the principle of interpretation which we have adopted, that a more satisfactory and more intelligible exposition can be found within the brief limits which we have laid down than in the whole history of the world from that time to our own.

It remains to be seen if we are able to give an interpretation somewhat less fanciful, and more suited to the date and age of the Apocalypse.

After what has been already said I need scarcely comment upon the fact that theories of the most extravagant kind have been held with regard to "The woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

The prevalent idea appears to be that this symbol represents the Christian Church, and to this view I now incline to accede. In a former edition I endeavoured to show that "The Woman" designated the mother of our Lord; that her being "clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," indicated that superiority and distinction which belongs to her whom "all generations were to call blessed." That her bringing forth "The man child who should rule all nations with a rod of iron," shadowed forth the history of that "highly favoured" individual who "brought forth her first born son"—"the seed of the woman"—"born of a woman," of whom the prophets wrote, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son,"¹—"A woman shall compass a man."²

Subsequent consideration has led me to see great difficulties in the way of this interpretation, and such as I think cannot be reconciled with the general analogy of the prophecy. But

¹ Isaiah, vii. 14.

² Jeremiah, xxxi. 22.

before entering upon the interpretation which now seems to me to be the true one, I shall briefly state those arguments which have induced me to adopt a different opinion.

1. If the mother of our Lord is intended to be represented by the symbol of "The woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," we are obliged, in that case, to *assume* that the Blessed Virgin lived to see her Son's words fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. It is true there is no evidence for or against this. No mention by name of the mother of our Lord is found in the Scriptures after the ascension, and ecclesiastical history is as barren of information on this point as the Scriptures themselves. There is indeed a tradition that the Blessed Virgin died at Ephesus some fifteen years after our Lord's crucifixion. But all is conjecture. Scripture and Church history are both silent, and in the absence of facts it is not well to make them. There is proof to show that after our Lord's ascension she was assembled together with the rest of the Christian Church at Jerusalem.¹ There is *not* proof to show that she ever left Jerusalem, or that she did not live to witness its destruction. To lay down, then, as an indispensable postulate what after all is matter of much uncertainty, and to require, as a necessary condition to the interpretation of the chapter, that the mother of our Lord *must have lived to witness the destruction of Jerusalem*, of which no proof whatever can be given, appears too insecure a foundation on which to rest a satisfactory explanation of this symbol, and leaves us open to the charge of assumption, and to the censure which has been so freely bestowed on our opponents for the same cause.

2. Added to this, mention is made in v. 17. of "The Dragon going to war with the remnant of her seed, *which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*" This is explained in v. 12. of chap. xiv. to mean the Christian Church. "Here is the patience of THE SAINTS, *here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*" This leaves no doubt as to what is meant by the symbol of "the woman clothed with the sun"—for of no individual could it be said, that the remnant of her seed were "*the saints.*"

¹ Acts, i. 14.

It is evident that the Church alone can answer to this description, and that the symbol cannot be so well applied to an individual as to an aggregate body.

3. But perhaps the most convincing proof that "the woman" must represent the Christian Church will be found in the fact, that the term "woman" in the Apocalypse is used to designate not one individual, but many. Thus, "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters," elsewhere called "the woman, *γυνή*, sitting on the beast," is defined to be "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Thus, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife, *γυναικα*," is declared to be "that great city, the holy Jerusalem," shining with the glory of the 144,000. Besides, it is evident that a marked contrast is intended to be kept up between "the whore" and "the bride," *πόρνη* — *γυνή*, "the woman drunken with the blood of the saints," and "the woman, the remnant of whose seed keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ;" "the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, upon whose forehead was a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth*, and the "woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

If "the woman" "the whore," must be understood to represent not one individual, but many,—for she is declared to mean "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,"—it follows that "the woman"—"the Bride," the remnant of whose seed "keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," must likewise denote more individuals than one.

4. Moreover, "the woman flies into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days," "where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time from the face of the serpent." This, as we have elsewhere seen, is the exact period of the Jewish war. It surely could not be said of the mother of our Lord, even on the supposition that she was yet alive, that she fled alone into the wilderness for safety, and that protection was afforded to her which was denied to the rest of the Christian Church.

These considerations have led me to think, that however closely that portion of the allegory which represents "the woman" bringing forth the man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron" assimilates to the history of the Blessed Virgin, yet still that the analogy of the prophecy does not warrant our applying the symbol of "the woman" to an individual, and that the idea intended to be conveyed is the preservation of the Church from the wrath of Satan in those perilous times.

Having given what I trust may be thought sufficient reasons for this change of opinion, I proceed to analyse the chapter more in detail. St. John sees a great wonder in heaven. "A woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

The idea may be simply that of glory and distinction, or it may represent the Church as clothed with the sun of righteousness, under her feet the moon of sublunary power, and around her head the coronet of the twelve tribes or of the twelve apostles. She is represented as "being with child, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered,"—an evident allusion to Isaiah, lxvi. 7, 8., "Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once? *for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children.*"

It is worthy of notice that "the woman" is called by the prophet "*Zion*," or the Church, and in either prediction she is represented as in travail, and bearing a man-child. This man-child must be "the Lord Jesus Christ:" of no other could it be said, that he "was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," and that "he was caught up to God and to his throne." It is true there is a difficulty in comprehending how the Church could bring forth the man-child; but there always has been a true Church of God in the world in every age, and from that Church, according to the flesh, Christ sprang.

Contemporaneously with the vision of the Church travailing in birth and pained to be delivered, St. John sees another wonder in heaven. "Behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast

them to the earth." We are not left in doubt as to who is meant by "The great red dragon;" for in verse 9. he is declared to be "That old serpent called the Devil or Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Here, then, we have the definition of the Apocalypse itself, and nothing more need be said. He is called the "*red* dragon," because of the cruel nature of him who was a "murderer from the beginning." The "seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns," are expressive of great and formidable dominion; his "tail drawing the third part of the stars of heaven, and casting them to the earth," is indicative, perhaps, of those fallen spirits whom he associated with himself in rebellion against God; hence we read of "the devil and his angels."

"And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born, and she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up to God and to his throne."

Here is an allusion to the earliest persecution of the Church by Satan. As he was a murderer, so also was he a persecutor from the beginning. As he made war with "the remnant of her seed," so also did he make war with him who is "Head over all things to his Church." We are immediately reminded of Satan's persecution against our Lord from the moment of his birth—of Herod's seeking the young child's life to destroy it—of the murder of the infants at Bethlehem—of Joseph taking the young child and his mother by night and departing into Egypt, and remaining there until the death of Herod.

"And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," "*ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρῇ.*" This is true only of Christ. Of Him alone could it be said, in the words of David, "Ask of me, and I will give thee *the heathen* for thine inheritance, and the *uttermost parts of the earth* for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a *rod of iron*," (*i. e.*, a powerful sceptre) "and shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This power is expressly applied to Christ in the 19th verse of chap. xx.: "He shall rule them" (*τὰ ἔθνη*, the Gentiles) "*with a rod of iron.*" It is also applied to believers, who shall sit and reign with Christ. "He that overcometh, to him will I give power over the nations, and he

shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, *even as I received of my Father.*"

"And her child was caught up to God and to his throne." This can only mean Him who was the "first-born from the dead¹," "the first-begotten of the dead²," who was caught up to God when the "cloud received him out of their sight³," and who is "set down with his father upon his throne."⁴ A very remarkable passage of St. Ignatius serves to throw some light upon this attempt of Satan "to devour the man-child as soon as he was born." The passage is as follows:— "Three mysteries of clamour, which were done in the silence of God, deceived the prince of this world—the *virginity of Mary, and her parturition, likewise also the death of the Lord.*"⁵

This extraordinary quotation seems to show that ideas similar to those of St. John with regard to the escape of our Lord from the power of Satan were held by the early Church, and that if Satan failed "to devour the man-child as soon as it was born," it was because "these mysteries were done in the silence of God."

Foiled in his attempt to crush the Church in its infancy, in the person of its divine Head, who is "caught up to God and to his throne," this persecution is renewed with ten-fold vigour against the Christian Church. This is represented under the symbol of "*war in heaven.*" "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them

¹ Col. i. 18.

³ Acts, i. 9.

² Rev. i. 5.

⁴ Rev. iii. xxi.

⁵ Καὶ ἔλαθεν τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, ἡ παρθενία Μαρίας, καὶ ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ θάνατος τοῦ Κυρίου. Τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς, ἅτινα ἐν ἡσυχία Θεοῦ ἐπράχθη. — S. Ignatii ad Ephesios, xix.

before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”¹ Michael and his angels, the powers of good arrayed under Christ and his Apostles, fight against the dragon and his angels, the devil and his fellow apostates, and the issue is victory and triumph to the Church. That the parties engaged in this warfare are not actually in heaven, is evident from the circumstance that the conquerors are defined to be the martyrs of those days. “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, *and they loved not their lives unto the death.*”

I need not enlarge on the well-known fact that the period comprehending the space between the ascension and the second coming of Christ was one of triumph and victory to the Christian Church,—that the Saviour’s words received their full accomplishment, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,”²—that the promise, “Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, *and over all the power of the enemy*, and nothing shall by any means hurt you,”³ was abundantly fulfilled,—that the Apostles everywhere cast out devils,—that evil spirits followed them and cried, “These men are the servants of the most high God which shew unto us the way of salvation,”⁴—and that the place of the dragon and his angels “was found no more in heaven.”⁵ I need not say that the Gospel penetrated during that period, as Clement says, “to the utmost bounds of East and West,” or that St. Paul’s glorious testimony was not an idle boast,—“From Jerusalem, and round

¹ Rev. xii. 7—11.

² Luke, x. 18.

³ Luke, x. 19.

⁴ Acts, xvi. 17.

⁵ The term “heaven,” when not employed in connection with other words which qualify and restrict its meaning, is often used to signify *the Church of Christ*. In Rev. xii. 12., “*The heavens and they that dwell in them,*” i. e. the Christian Church, are put in strong and forcible apposition to *the earth and they that dwell in it*. “Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell therein. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea,”—where the Christian Church is bid to rejoice because of the triumph of the martyrs over the malice of Satan. This is further explained, Rev. xviii. 20., where the Church—“the heaven”—is spoken of in connection with “the holy apostles and prophets.” “Rejoice over her (Babylon), *thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets,*” in which passage the term “heaven” evidently means the Church.

about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”¹ This evidence will serve to show that Michael and his angels prevailed over the dragon and his angels,—that the apostles of Christ triumphed over all Satanic opposition,—that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church,—and that “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, — τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην — he was cast into the earth, — εἰς τὴν γῆν, Judæa — and his angels were cast out with him.”

Here is a powerful contrast between “*the whole world*,” an expression used by the Jews to designate “the habitable earth,” and “*the earth*,” Judæa. It serves to define in an unmistakable manner the particular land into which Satan is said to be cast. This is confirmed in verse 12., where the people of Judæa are described by that peculiar phrase *which is used only of them in the Apocalypse* — “*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea*, — τοῖς κατοικοῦσι τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, — for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

The question arises, was that short time a time of extraordinary wickedness? Did it appear evident that Satan and his angels were cast into the earth—Judæa; and did evil run rampant through the land, till it became ripe for the coming destruction? Of this we have abundant proof. Our Lord declared that the iniquity of those days should be only equalled by their deep affliction—“*Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*”² The holiest ties appear to have been broken through in the absorbing wickedness of the age. “Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.”³ Moreover, the peculiar character of that wickedness seems to have been attributable to *Satanic agency*. “There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, (i. e. miracles,) insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive

¹ Rom. xv. 19.

² Matt. xxiv. 12.

³ Mark, xiii. 12.

the very elect.”¹ St. Paul confirms these statements of our Lord, and declares, that “That day shall not come except there come a falling away² first, and that man of sin — Satan — be revealed the son of perdition . . . and then shall that wicked — *ἀνομός* — be revealed . . . whose coming is after the working of Satan, *with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, (i. e. miracles,) and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.*”³

Such appears to have been the complexion of those last and perilous times. No species of wickedness was too horrible to be practised, no form of lust too revolting. Murder, incest, sacrilege, were every-day crimes. “You have not,” says Josephus to the Jews, “avoided so much as those sins which are usually done in secret: I mean thefts and treacherous plots against men, and adulteries. You are quarrelling about rapines and murders, and invent strange ways of wickedness. Nay, the temple itself is become the receptacle of all, and this divine place is polluted by the hands of our own country. What crime is there, I pray you, that is so much as kept secret among you, or is concealed by you; nay, what is there that is not open to your very enemies; for you show your transgressions after a pompous manner, and contend one with another which of you shall be more wicked than another?”⁴

He elsewhere says, “I suppose that, had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom, for it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such punishments, for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed.”⁵ Is it a wonder that our Lord should have said, “Fill ye up then the measure of your

¹ Matt. xxiv. 24.

² “Ὅτι εἴαν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποστασία πρῶτον,” i. e., unless THE APOSTASY come first, where our version gives “except there come a falling away first;” —making the whole quite indefinite; whereas THE APOSTASY had in view by the apostle is evidently that specified one predicted by our Lord.” — Lee on Prophecy, p, 238.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 3. 10.

⁴ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 13.

⁵ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 9.

fathers, *ye serpents, ye generation of vipers*, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"¹

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he *persecuted* the woman which brought forth the man-child."

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to *make war* with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The expression "to make war" is used in the Apocalypse to signify persecution. This is evident from a comparison of the preceding verses, where the phrase "The dragon . . . went to *make war* with the woman" is explained by the correlative clause — "The dragon . . . *persecuted* the woman which brought forth the man-child." It is used in a similar sense under the Seventh Trumpet and Seventh Vial.

Trumpet. "It was given unto him (Rome) to *make war* with the saints, and to overcome them."²

Vial. "These (the ten horns of Rome) *shall make war* with the Lamb."³

Now is there proof to show that the dragon at this particular period "persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child?" We are expressly told⁴ that "the dragon gave power unto the Beast" (Rome); that "the dragon gave him his power, and his seat and great authority;"⁵ and Rome appears at this time to have been the great instrument of persecution against Christianity. Having so frequently spoken of the persecutions which proceeded at this period from the Roman power against the Church of Christ, I shall not deem it necessary to add any thing to this well known and established fact; but shall consider it abundantly proved that this particular period was not only a period of fierce and savage persecution against Christianity, but that it was the *first commencement* of a fiery ordeal, such as the Church had not before experienced, and that from the date of the casting of the dragon to the earth began that exterminating, and possibly in many cases undistinguishing desolation against the Jews, whether Christians or not, which ended in their complete and entire destruction.

¹ Matt. xxiii. 33.

² Rev. xvii. 14.

³ Rev. xiii. 2—4.

² Rev. xiii. 7.

⁴ Rev. xiii. 4.

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle¹, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.”²

Observe that “the woman” flies *into the wilderness* for safety. So, in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, “many that sought after justice and judgment went down *into the wilderness* to dwell there.”³ So Elijah fled *into the wilderness* in the days of Ahab from Jezebel. Our Lord gave the same command: “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, . . . then let them which are in Judæa flee unto the mountains,” *i. e., into the wilderness*⁴; and it is not a little remarkable that Eusebius says that the Christians abandoned the whole land of Judæa, and removed “*beyond the Jordan*,”—the country beyond the Jordan being usually called *the wilderness*.⁵

This is a powerful confirmation of the symbol of the Apocalypse in which the woman is represented as flying for safety *into the wilderness*, where she hath a place prepared of God.

Observe next, *the time during which she is to be nourished in the wilderness*. She is to be fed there

“A thousand two hundred and threescore days.”

“A time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.”

This, as we have seen, was the exact period during which the Roman invasion lasted. It is unreasonable to suppose that

¹ The idea appears to be simply, that God interposed for the rescue of his church. It is possibly an allusion to that exquisite passage in Deuteronomy, where God is represented as bearing Israel in the wilderness on eagle's wings: “As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.” — Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

² Rev. xii. 14—16.

³ 1 Maccabees, ii. 29.

⁴ Compare 1 Maccabees, ii. 28., where “the mountains” are put for “the wilderness.”

⁵ Compare “Bethabara, *beyond Jordan*, where John was baptising” (John i. 28.), with “John did baptize *in the wilderness*.” — Mark, i. 4.

during that period provision would be made for the safety of the Christian Church, and that, according to our Lord's prophecy, not a "hair of their head should perish?" We find, upon unquestionable authority, that such provision was made; that the woman was nourished in the wilderness from the face of the serpent. Eusebius tells us, "The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town *beyond the Jordan* (in the wilderness), called Pella: here, those that believed in Christ *having removed from Jerusalem*, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judæa, the divine justice for their crimes against Christ and his Apostles finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evil-doers from the earth."¹

To recapitulate :—

Under the trumpet. A loud voice is heard in heaven saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, *for the accuser of our brethren is cast down* which accused them before our God day and night."

Under the Vial. "The Seventh Angel poured out his vial *into the air*²,—the abode of Satan,—and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done."

A great wonder (*σημεῖον*, a miraculous prodigy) appears in heaven. It is that of the Church clothed with the righteousness of her Redeemer, having the moon under her feet, and crowned with a galaxy of twelve stars. And lo another wonder (*σημεῖον*) in heaven :—A great red dragon who had persecuted the Church from the beginning in the person of her divine head, stands ready to persecute "the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and which have the testimony of Jesus Christ." In the figurative language of the Apocalypse, there is war in heaven — contending

¹ Eus. lib. iii. cap. 5.

² The air, or the lower part of the heaven, is said, in Scripture, to be the abode of Satan. Hence, he is called "The Prince of the power of the air," (Ephes. ii. 2.) "Spiritual wickedness in high places,—ἐπουρανίους, heavenly places."—Ephes. vi. 12.

armies join in battle in heavenly places—the hosts of the living God radiant with glory and might meet rank with rank and phalanx with phalanx against the powers of hell and darkness. “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.”

“Headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heaven; eternal wrath
Burn’d after them to the bottomless pit.”—MILTON.

The dragon is cast out of the heaven of the Church of Christ into the earth—Judæa, and his angels are cast out with him. Then arose the mournful plaint anticipatory of the coming distress. “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the devil is come down unto them having great wrath, for he knoweth *that he hath but a short time*,” and that the God of peace will bruise him under the feet of his Church “*shortly*.”¹ Woe to the land of Judæa, because of the abounding iniquity, and the cup which they must fill to the measure of their fathers. From this persecution the Lord delivers them that are his. The Church flies into the wilderness *beyond the Jordan* to a place, Pella—prepared of God, — made known unto her “*by divine revelation before the war*.” There “she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time from the face of the serpent.” There she is fed “a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” The serpent casts out of his mouth a waterflood to destroy her, but the gates of hell cannot prevail against her, and the destruction is averted by Him who miraculously interposes for the deliverance of his Church.

I commend this interpretation as more suited to the day and age of the Apocalypse than that of Dr. Cumming. It will be seen that it thoroughly eschews the notion of Arians or Trinitarians, of Vandals, Visigoths, or Huns, having ever entered into the writer’s mind. It will be seen, that it is content to prefer the scriptural definition of the great red dragon, given in the Apocalypse, to a definition which has no deeper foundation than the coinage of the imagination. It will be seen, that it

¹ Rom. vi. 20.

supposes all allusion to the Emperor Maximin to be fast verging on the fabulous, and the period of the woman's gestation of 280 years to savour strongly of the ridiculous and the apocryphal. And let me observe once again that I do not offer these remarks in any uncharitable spirit, or with any intention of speaking irreverently of holy things. If I cannot resist a smile now and then, it is not because I forget I am dealing with a sacred subject, but because I am anxious to show that truth never suffers in comparison with error. It is not because my house is built of stone and Dr. Cumming's of glass that I can afford to fling stones at him; it is only because I think — and it is but my opinion after all — that my house will resist harder knocks than his, that I presume to call attention to the points of difference between us. May the end and upshot be increased and ever increasing knowledge, light, and truth!

LECTURE XIV.

THE BEAST RISING FROM THE SEA, AND THE BEAST
COMING UP OUT OF THE EARTH.

REV. xiii.

1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to

REV. xvii.

1. And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

3. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

5. And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

9. If any man hath an ear, let him hear.

10. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

11. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth ; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

12. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

14. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast ; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads :

17. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel ? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not ; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition : and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9. And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10. And there are seven kings : five are fallen and one is, *and* the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh he must continue a short space.

11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings : and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful.

15. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

17. For God hath put into their

18. Here is wisdom, Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

It will be borne in mind that we are still pursuing the subject of the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial. Now, although in the previous Lecture an identity was to be traced between the Trumpet and Vial, inasmuch as the Vial is poured into "the air," and the Trumpet describes an accuser cast out, whose abode is said to be "the air," it was not of a complete and perfect kind ; and yet it was of that kind which is very common in the Apocalypse, where an event barely mentioned under the one is explained at greater length under the other. If you compare the description of the kings of the East and their armies, which are only just alluded to in the Sixth Vial, and detailed at great length under the Sixth Trumpet,—the Resurrection, only faintly sketched under the symbol of "watching and keeping the garments, lest they walk naked" in the Vial, and carried out into finished proportions in the Trumpet under the figure of the Open Book and the Two Witnesses,—the "earthquake," only mentioned under the Seventh Trumpet and fully described under the Seventh Vial,—the "great hail," as it were incidentally introduced under the same Trumpet, and the full particulars of its destructiveness given under the Vial,—you will readily perceive similar instances. In the present case the identity is complete under both ; and, in order to ascertain this identity, we must, as usual, compare the Trumpet with the Vial.

Trumpet. "I saw . . . a Beast rise up out of the sea."

Vial. "The Beast that thou sawest . . . shall ascend out of the bottomless pit—*ἄβυσσος*." ¹

T. "Having seven heads and ten horns."

V. "Having seven heads and ten horns."

¹ In the Septuagint, the sea is called *ἄβυσσος* ; "*ἀβύσσου πηγαὶ κάρωθεν*." — Deut. xxxiii. 13.

T. "And upon his *horns ten crowns.*"

V. "The *ten horns . . . are ten kings.*"

T. "Upon his heads the *name of Blasphemy.*"

V. "Full of *names of Blasphemy.*"

T. "The dragon *gave him his power and his seat and great authority.*"

V. "These (ten horns) have one mind, *and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast.*"

T. "I saw one of his heads, as it were, *wounded to death.*"

V. "The Beast that thou sawest was, *and is not.*"

T. "And his deadly wound was *healed.*"

V. "The Beast that was, and is not, *and yet is.*"

T. "All the world, (ὅλη ἡ γῆ, Judæa,) *wondered after the Beast.*"

V. "They that dwell on the earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, Judæa,) *shall wonder.*"

T. "And they *worshipped the Beast.*"

V. "Which had *not worshipped the Beast.*"¹

T. "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and *Blasphemies.*"

V. "A scarlet coloured Beast, *full of names of Blasphemy.*"

T. "Power was given to him to continue *forty and two months.*"

V. "Until the words of God shall be fulfilled," *i. e.* "a time, times, and an half" — forty-two months.²

T. "It was given unto him *to make war with the saints.*"

V. "These (the ten horns of the Beast) *shall make war with the Lamb.*"

T. "Power was given him over all *kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*"

V. "The waters, (*i. e.* the Beast,) . . . are *peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*"³

¹ Rev. xx. 4.

² Compare Dan. xii. 7.

³ Compare Rev. xvii. 1. with xvii. 3.

T. “*And all that dwell upon the earth (Judæa) shall worship him.*”

V. “*Them that worshipped his image.*”¹ i. e. “*they that dwell on the earth*” (Judæa)²

T. “*Whose names are not written in the Book of Life.*”

V. “*Whose names were not written in the Book of Life.*”

T. “*From the foundation of the world.*”

V. “*From the foundation of the world.*”

T. “*Of the Lamb slain.*”

V. “*The Lamb's Book of Life.*”³

I find with no small degree of satisfaction that Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming allow of the identity between chap. xiii. and chap. xvii. I do not see very well how they could help it; but the consolation is not the less that they are obliged to allow it. If, then, the identity must be conceded in one case, why should not this identity be conceded in all? I hesitate not to affirm, that strong as this resemblance is, it is not a whit stronger than many previous and some successive points of resemblance between the Trumpets and Vials. It is a powerful argument for the correctness of our position, for it is the concession of an adversary, that there *does* exist an identity between chap. xiii. and chap. xvii.

I proceed to give a brief statement of the exposition given of these chapters by our theological opponent; but before I open his book to look at what he has said, I am quite sure it is all Rome. And, indeed, it is impossible to deny but that here there are points of resemblance. He has never come so close to the Apocalyptic symbols as in his interpretation of this part of the book. The glaring error of his interpretation is the false system of chronology by which he arrives at last to Rome. So many steps are taken upon shifting sand, so many arguments built on airy nothings, so many piles driven into a no more substantial element than the waves of ocean, that when we come at last to Rome, and seem to be in a fair way for a splendid attack upon an erring church, our previously-laid

¹ Rev. xix. 20.

² Rev. xiii. 14.

³ Rev. xxi. 27.

foundation totters beneath our feet, and the rounds of our chronological ladder are insufficient to support our weight.

Dr. Cumming says of the wild beast from the sea and from the abyss, that "it is characterised by attributes so clear and unequivocal, that if it were described in the page of history, the Pope of Rome would instantly present himself to the mind of any person as the individual intended to be represented by these symbols."¹ The ten horns are the division of the Roman empire into the ten kingdoms of Europe. The blasphemies of the beast,—the Papal assumed character of Vicar of Christ. The beast making war with the Lamb, (as may be supposed, a very fruitful subject,) — the cruelties and persecutions of the Roman Catholic Church, &c.

I perfectly agree with Dr. Cumming when he says the beast rising out of the sea, and ascending from the abyss, must be Rome.² No other power can answer so closely to the Apocalyptic description. The only question is, Is it Rome of the date and age of the Apocalypse, or is it Rome of 1000 years after? Is it Rome Pagan, or is it Rome Papal? I am prepared to show that it could have been no other than Rome of that day—the monster tyrant of the world—the vindictive persecutor of Christianity; that Rome Pagan, equally with Rome Papal, had upon its seven heads the name of Blasphemy; that Rome Pagan, equally with Rome Papal, made war upon the saints; that Rome Pagan, equally with Rome Papal, usurped universal dominion, and compelled all conquered nations to adopt the worship of its gods. I am prepared to show that there is not a single expression which can be ap-

¹ Apoc. Sketches, p. 518.

² It is worthy of notice that Barnabas, Hermas, Daniel, and St. John, speak of the Roman power under the name of the "BEAST." It is also remarkable that they all represent the Beast as rising from the sea.

"The four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea, and four great Beasts came up."—Dan. vii. 2, 3.

"I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea."—Rev. xiii. 1.

"I saw a fourth Beast, wicked and powerful, and more cruel than other beasts of the sea."

"Et vidi quartam bestiam nequam et fortem et saviorem cæteris bestiis marinis."—S. Barnabæ, Epist. 4.

"Lo, I see a great Beast, as a whale."

"Ecce video bestiam magnam veluti cetum."—Hermæ Pastor, visio 4.

plied to Rome Papal, which does not apply with tenfold propriety to Rome Pagan. And then when you put the question, Is the Apocalypse a prophecy of events to reach to the end of time, or of events "shortly to come to pass?" Is it a chronological history of the world and of the Church, or a Divine revelation to warn the Church of that day of the "hour of temptation that was coming (*τῆς μελλούσης ἐρχέσθαι*, *that was soon coming*) to try all them that dwelt on the earth?" Was its design to give us a compendium of popes, councils, and fathers; to enter so minutely into ecclesiastical history as to mark out the Tractarian heresy, and so closely into civil history as to embrace every war from the time of Vespasian to the Russian invasion; or was its object to warn the Church of dangers near at hand; so near and close that the charge is given to St. John,—“Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand?” We are compelled to allow, that if a persecuting power, such as this is defined to be, rose up at that time, corresponding in all its particulars to the Apocalyptic symbol, we have found the right and legitimate interpretation; and that, however all this may be applied, in a secondary sense, by those who think themselves at liberty to do so, to Rome Papal, in its first and primary sense it has an indubitable reference to Rome Pagan.

Let us take the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters together, and proceed to explain their meaning.

“A beast” (<i>θηρίον</i>) “rises up out of the sea.”		“A beast” (<i>θηρίον</i>) “ascends out of the bottomless pit.”
--	--	--

This is universally allowed to be the great Roman power. Daniel speaks of the “winds of heaven striving upon the great sea;” *i. e.* the Mediterranean¹; and from this sea the fourth great beast proceeds. Add to this, that Italy is a peninsula, and that Rome, as it were, rises from the sea.

“Having seven heads and ten horns.”		“Having seven heads and ten horns.”
-------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------

The seven heads are employed in a twofold sense: they designate local situation and government.

¹ Dan. vii. 2.

Local situation— for “the seven heads are seven mountains.” This can refer to no other city so well as the seven-hilled city; the city spoken of by every poet of the day, and thoroughly well known as the city built on seven hills.

Government — for the seven heads are “seven kings : five are fallen *and one is.*”

It is very useful to us in our argument that the Jewish historian of that period calls “Augustus Cæsar the second emperor of the Romans.”¹ Then Julius Cæsar was the first, Augustus the second, Tiberius the third, Caius or Caligula the fourth, Claudius the fifth, and, after Claudius the sixth, (*then living,*) Nero. This fixes the date of the Apocalypse. Nero died A.D. 68; Jerusalem perished A.D. 70. Consequently, the Apocalypse must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem.

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast.”

“The first beast whose deadly wound was healed.”

“The beast which had a wound by a sword, and did live.”

“The beast that thou sawest was and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition, and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder . . . when they behold the beast that was and is not and yet is.”

This is unquestionably the most difficult passage in the Apocalypse. The only probable solution of it which I have seen is that of Moses Stuart², which represents St. John—not guilty of prevarication, as Mr. Elliott somewhat coarsely says—but alluding to the popular belief, that Nero would revive after his assassination, and regain his former power.

Suetonius says : “It was predicted to Nero that he would at some time be reduced to a state of great destitution; *some, however, promised him the restoration of all his former fortune.*” He elsewhere mentions, that “After his assassination, they adorned his tomb with flowers, and proclaimed edicts, *as if he were living, and would shortly return.*”³

Tacitus asserts that “Achaia and Asia were terrified as if Nero

¹ “Under whom died Cæsar (Augustus), the second emperor of the Romans, the duration of whose reign was fifty-seven years six months and two days.” — Jos. Antiq. xviii. 2, 2.

² Excursus, 3.

³ Suet. Nero, 40.

was coming, reports being various respecting his death, *many on this account believing that he was still alive.*¹

Sulpicius Severus, an ecclesiastical writer of the third century : “ It is uncertain whether he (Nero) destroyed himself ; whence it is believed that, although *he may have pierced himself with a sword, yet he was saved by the cure of his wound*, in accordance with that which is written² ‘ And his deadly wound was healed ;’ “ *at the close of the age he is to be sent again, that he may exercise the mystery of iniquity.*”³

Augustine :—“ What means the declaration that the mystery of iniquity already works ? Some suppose this to be spoken of the Roman emperor, and therefore Paul did not speak in plain words, because he would not incur the charge of calumny for having spoken evil of the Roman emperor ; although he always expected that what he had said would be understood as applying to *Nero*, whose doings already appeared like to those of Antichrist. *Hence it was that some suspected that he would rise from the dead as Antichrist.* Others supposed he was not actually slain, but had only withdrawn himself that he might seem to be dead, and that he was concealed while living in the vigour of his age and when he was supposed to be extinct, *until in his time he would be revealed and restored to his kingdom.*”⁴

Such was the belief in those days respecting

“ The beast wounded to death, whose deadly wound was healed.”

“ The beast that . . . shall go into perdition.”

“ The beast which had a wound by a sword and did live.”

“ The beast that was and is not and yet is.”

“ The beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth and is of the seven.”

It is not at all necessary for us to believe that St. John understood that Nero would recover from his wound ; he only makes use of the popular belief respecting Nero, to designate that head which he was afraid to mention by name. St. Paul seems equally afraid of mentioning the tyrant by name : I was delivered,” he says, “ out of the mouth of the lion.”⁵ He alludes

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. 8.

² Rev. xiii. 3.

³ Hist. Sac. ii. 29.

⁴ De Civit. Dei. xx. 19.

⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 17.

to more than he dared express openly when he says, (in 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7.) "Ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time, for the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only *he who now letteth* will let until he be taken out of the way." So it would seem was the case with St. John, respecting the tyrant Nero. Sufficient intimation was given to the Christian Church without mentioning the name of Nero. It appears just that necessary caution void of needless provocation, which might be expected from those who were to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves."¹

"Having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns."

"Having seven heads and ten horns," "and the ten horns . . are ten kings."

These ten horns have been interpreted of the ten great kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided. I am not at all sure that the Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms, nor do I think that any substantial proof can be brought to bear upon this subject. Neither do I imagine that the ten horns represent the ten modern kingdoms of Europe. If they represent the great kingdoms, they are too many; if they represent all the kingdoms, they are too few. Besides which, they "receive power as kings one hour," "*μίαν ὥραν*," or *at the same time*, "with the beast." They have "received no kingdom as yet," because no other universal kingdom was to succeed the great Roman empire, except the kingdom of Christ. They

¹ It is worthy of notice that a similar caution is employed with regard to the number of the Beast. Irenæus says, this was done to avoid giving offence to the Roman emperor (Con. Hær. lib. v.). Augustine, as we have seen, repeats the same idea. To have mentioned the reigning monarch by name would, possibly, only have sharpened the violence of the persecution.

I desire here to express my inability to give any thing more than a conjectural explanation of verse 11. of chap. xvii. It appears evident that "the eighth" king is the same as the "one that now is,"—the sixth—for it is said of them both, that they "go into perdition" (Rev. xvii. 8—11.), and both are described as "the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is."—Rev. xvii. 8—11.

The other king who "is not yet come," and who, "when he cometh, must continue a short space," and who completes the number of the seven kings, is possibly Galba, who succeeded him, and reigned but three months. The eighth, who was to succeed him, and who was "*of the seven*" (showing that he could not literally be the eighth), is most probably the same as "the beast who shall ascend, (*μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν*, shall soon ascend,) out of the bottomless pit,"—i. e. Nero.

are confederate with the Beast,—they give their power and strength unto the Beast,—they hate the enemies of the Beast, and give their kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

I can see no necessity for converting these horns into the modern kingdoms of Europe. They seem to indicate the great and enormous power of Rome, aided by tributaries and allies. The number ten is used continually in the Apocalypse in an indefinite sense. Satan is said to have ten horns,—meaning great and terrible power. The Christians of Smyrna were to have tribulation ten days. So our Lord gave to his servants ten talents, and made them rulers of ten cities. The idea simply appears to be that of the great and terrible power of the Roman empire.¹

We have next a description of the power of the Beast.

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion.” “And they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast, and who is able to make war with him?”

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceeding, and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it.” — Dan. vii. 7.

From an innumerable multitude of passages from ancient authors, which serve to confirm the great dominion of the Roman empire, I select as most suitable the speech of Agrippa to the Jews, before the breaking out of the Jewish war.

“You are the only people who think it a disgrace to be servants to those to whom the world hath submitted. Hath not your army been often beaten by the neighbouring nations, while the power of the Romans is invincible in all parts of the habitable earth?—nay, they seek for somewhat still beyond that, for the Euphrates is not a sufficient boundary for them on the east, nor the Danube on the north, nor Cadiz on the west; nay, indeed, they have sought for another habitable earth beyond the ocean, and have carried their arms as far as such

¹ St. Augustine says: “The ten horns signify universality of dominion.” In like manner, the Babylonian conquerors of Judæa are represented under the figure of *four horns*. “Then I lifted up mine eyes and behold *four horns*; . . . and he answered me, these are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.” — Zech. i. 18, 19.

British isles as were never known before. Who has not heard of the great number of the Germans? yet these Germans, who dwell in an immense country, and in rage more fierce than wild beasts, are tamed by eight Roman legions. You who depend upon the walls of Jerusalem, consider what a wall the Britons had, and yet the Romans sailed away unto them, and subdued them, while they were encompassed by the ocean; and four legions are a sufficient guard for so large an island. Now, when almost all people under the sun submit to the Roman arms, will you be the only people that make war against them? Where are the people that you are to have for your auxiliaries, for all that are in the habitable earth are under the Romans?"¹

The Beast rising from the sea is next described as having names of blasphemy upon his heads.

"Upon his heads the name of blasphemy."

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies."

"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."

"A scarlet coloured beast full of names of blasphemy."—Rev. xvii. 3.

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and they shall be given into his hand, until a time, times, and the dividing of a time."—Dan. vii. 25.

Now, can we find in the history of those times a power answering to this description? Did a power rise at that period "speaking great things and blasphemies," uttering "great words against the Most High," "blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven?"

It is a powerful confirmation of these views, that at the particular time for which we plead, a power rose up fully answering to this description. Eusebius says, "Nero took up arms against that very religion which acknowledges the one true God. He was the first of the emperors which displayed himself *an enemy of piety towards the Deity*. He publicly announced himself as *the chief enemy of God*."² His predecessor, Caligula, had literally blasphemed *the name of God and his tabernacle*. Philo tells us, "So great was the caprice of Caligula towards the nation of the Jews, that he appropriated

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 16.

² Eus. lib. ii. cap. 25.

their places of worship to himself in all their cities, filling them with his images and statues¹, for having permitted it (*i. e.* Divine worship to be paid to him), where others erected them of their own accord, he now began to erect them by absolute command. But the temple in the holy city, which had been left untouched as yet, he changed and transformed into a temple of his own; that it should be called the Temple of Caius the Younger—"the visible Jupiter," "ἐπιφάνους Διὸς."² St. Paul seems to allude to this profanation of the temple by setting up the statues of the Roman emperors, where he says, "So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." But all the follies of former emperors seem to have been surpassed by Nero. To him more particularly does the charge of blasphemy apply; he appears, as was common with the Roman emperors, to have been publicly worshipped. The following is a specimen of the religious adoration paid to him. He is returning to Rome after having been a conqueror in the Grecian games—he is received with these words:—"Victories Olympic! Victories Pythian! Thou august, august—to Nero the Hercules—to Nero the Apollo—The only conqueror in the games of the circus—*The eternal one, Εἰς ἀπ' αἰῶνος*—*Sacred voice*³—happy those who hear thee."⁴ "The most arrogant titles, says Rollin, were conferred on her emperors. To the Divine Julius. To the Eternal Prince, always, everywhere to be revered, Augustus. To the Prosperous and Unconquered, Unconquerable and Perpetual, ever August. The Restorer of the world. To the Triumphal Lord of the whole world. The Salvation of the human race."⁵

¹ "I sent messengers to the senate of Tiberias . . . to persuade them to demolish that house (temple) which Herod the tetrarch had built there, and which had the figures of living creatures in it, although our laws have forbidden us to make any such figures."—Life of Flavius Josephus, 12.

² Eus. lib. ii. cap. 6.

³ "Ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει, Θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου."—Acts, xii. 22.

⁴ Dio Cass.

⁵ "Sed et ampliora etiam humano fastigio decerni sibi passus est . . . templa, aras, simulacra juxta Deos, pulvinar, Flammen, Lupercos, appellationem mensis e suo nomine."—Suetonius, Julius, 76.

"Augustus . . . *Deus*, dum viveret, vocatus est, et divinis honoribus auctus."—Justin Martyr.

"Pari arrogantia cum procuratorum suorum nomine formalem dictaret

This is sufficient evidence to show that the names of blasphemy were peculiarly appropriate to the wild beast rising from the sea in the day of the Apocalypse, and that no pope ever assumed the title of Deity, or compelled religious homage, to the same extent as the deified emperors of Rome.

Another feature in the character of the beast rising from the sea is his persecution of the Christian Church :—

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.”

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.”

Was this wild beast rising from the sea a furious persecutor of the Christian Church? Did he make war with the saints, and with the Lamb? The Apocalypse is written under the fires of this terrible persecution; and it is most remarkable that this persecution is *the first systematic and organised persecution of Christianity*. Orosius says, “*Nero first persecuted the Christians* by torture and death; and he commanded that in all the provinces they should be tormented with the like persecution.”¹ Tertullian—“Examine your records; there you will find that *Nero was the first who persecuted this doctrine*, when, after subduing all the east, he exercised his cruelty against all at Rome. Such is the man of whom we boast as *the leader in our punishment*.”² Eusebius—“Nero began to take up arms against that very religion which acknowledges the one supreme God . . . *he was the first of the emperors* that displayed himself an enemy of piety towards the Deity.”³ Sulpicius Severus says of *Nero's reign*, — “The (Christian) religion was forbidden by the enactment of laws; and by edicts published, it was lawful for no one openly to be a Christian.”⁴

Tacitus tells us in the well-known passage, that “Nero, in order to stifle the rumour of having set Rome on fire, ascribed

epistolam, sic cepit — *Dominus et Deus noster* hoc fieri jubet . . . statuas sibi in Capitolio non nisi aureas et argenteas poni permisit et ponderis certi.” — Suetonius, Domit. 13.

“Diocletianus . . . adorari se jussit.” — Eutropius, lib. ix. 26.

¹ Historiæ, vii. 7.

² Apol. 5.

³ Eccles. Hist. ii. 25.

⁴ Hist. Sac. ii. 28.

it to those people who were hated for their wicked practices, and called Christians. *These he punished exquisitely*; nay, they made a mock of them as they perished, and destroyed them by putting them into the skins of wild beasts, and setting dogs on them to tear them to pieces. Some were nailed to crosses, and others flamed to death, and used as torches to illuminate the night. Nero offered his own gardens for this spectacle.”¹ Suetonius, Juvenal, and Martial add their testimony to the same point; and the sacred writings themselves, especially the later epistles, abounding as they do with warnings against apostasy and consolations under trials, show that the times of Nero—the last days of the Jewish dispensation—were marked by the most severe and terrible persecution.

Let us pass on to consider *the extraordinary prediction of Nero's violent death, which is recorded in the Apocalypse*. St. John invites attention to it in the same way as our Lord used to call attention to any circumstance which he wished to impress particularly: “If any man have an ear, let him hear!” —“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.” Here is an evident allusion to his own exile into Patmos, to the slaughter of the Christian Church, and to the retribution coming upon the tyrant himself.

Did this happen? We are told that human nature grew weary of bearing her persecutor, and the whole world seemed to rouse, as if by common consent, to rid the earth of a monster. Servius Galba, at that time governor of Spain, marches against Rome. Nero at once gave himself up to despair. He called, first, to a woman named Locusta, famous for poisoning, to furnish him with the means of death; he then desired one of his favourite gladiators to despatch him—no one would obey; he then rushed to plunge himself headlong into the Tiber, but his courage failed. In this distress, one of his servants offered to conceal him in his country house, about four miles distant from Rome. He sets out with four servants; an earthquake gives him the first alarm, then the lightning from heaven flashes in his face. A traveller meeting him, cries out, “These men are in pursuit of Nero.” His horse

¹ Tacit. Ann. xv. 44.

taking fright at the terrific storm, he dropped the handkerchief with which he had concealed his face, when a soldier addressed him by name. During this interval the senate had condemned him to die, by being fixed in a pillory, and scourged to death. He was so terrified at this, that he set a dagger to his throat, and gave himself a mortal wound. He was not quite dead when the soldiers, who had been sent in pursuit of him, entered the house, and one of them pretending that he came to his relief, endeavoured to stop the blood with his cloak ; but Nero, regarding him with a stern countenance, said, "Is this your fidelity?" upon which, with his eyes fixed, and staring frightfully, he expired. Such was the fulfilment of the prediction of the Apocalypse ; "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity ; he that killeth with the sword shall be killed with the sword."¹

Such are some of the historical confirmations of the characteristics of the beast rising out of the sea. There does not appear to be any necessity for having recourse to popes, canons, or councils, in order to present a solution of this portion of the Apocalypse. There is no occasion to say a word about the Inquisition, or Smithfield, or St. Bartholomew's day, or the massacre of the Waldenses and Albigenses. There is no imperative cause why a civil power, such as the beast rising from the sea evidently is, should be converted into an ecclesiastical power like the Church of Rome ; neither can any reason be given,—beyond the gratification of that *odium theologicum*, in conformity with which the service for the 5th of November continues to be read in some churches, as the softest way, I suppose, of healing an old sore,—why the predictions of this book should be referred to the Papacy at all. But not to insist on this, I cannot help saying, that in no part of the Apocalypse have commentators of this school appeared to come so near the truth as in referring

¹ "The immediate precursor of Antichrist, according to Lactantius, was Nero, and in this I believe Lactantius was right, and I have no doubt such was the general belief of the Church in his day. According to St. Paul, some one *who then let or stood in the way* was to be removed before the general persecutions commenced ; and we know that Nero ruled when Paul wrote this. . . . Nero, too, was literally *taken out of the way* in an extraordinary manner, for he disappeared, no one knowing how or why." — Lee on Prophecy, 237.

these statements to Papal Rome. And there is this obvious reason why they must be nearer now than before, because *Rome is now the legitimate scope of this prophecy*. But when the question arises, Is it Rome of our day, or Rome of hundreds of years ago? — Is it Rome of the time of Popes and Autos-da-fé, or is it Rome of the days of heathen persecution? — Is it the Rome of Nero Cæsar, or the Rome of Pio Nono? — Is it Rome Pagan, or Rome Papal? — That question is for ever settled by the aim and scope of the Apocalypse itself. *Then and there* (within the short limits which this system of interpretation allows) did a wild beast rise from the sea; — *Then and there* did he manifest his names and assumptions of blasphemy; — *Then and there* did he, “as God, sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;” — *Then and there* did he claim divine honours, and was publicly adored; — *Then and there* did this wild beast with his iron teeth break and devour all nations, till the whole habitable earth was under his power; — *Then and there* did this same beast commence the first furious persecution against Christianity, — then did he punish exquisitely the followers of the Lamb, — then did he make war with them, and earned, by many a deed of darkness and of cruelty, the unenviable distinction of “being the leader in their punishment;” — *Then and there* did common report fix upon him the extraordinary rumour of being dead and alive, of being wounded with a sword and yet living, of having pierced himself, and of having recovered from his wound (I do not see to what else this can possibly be referred; and no thanks appear to be too great to him who has given so probable a solution of so great a difficulty); — *Then and there* did this wild beast who had driven so many into captivity, himself go into captivity, and he who killed with the sword was killed with the sword. I am not afraid of saying, this is *simple*, easy, and natural, and, what is more, it is suited to the age and date of the Apocalypse. It is a part of that interpretation which at the commencement I said should be found in a very brief interval of time, and which I have been able to present before you within that interval. I have endeavoured not to swerve from this principle. I have had no retrogressions, and no metamorphoses. I have not taken violent liberties with popes and emperors, and I do not possess a magic wand. Strange it is that when an inter-

pretation can be found in every way suitable to those times, that commentators should travel so far out of their road for an interpretation reaching far away into distant centuries, and should introduce names and events which occupy a place in modern history as names and events in which the first readers of the Apocalypse would be likely to be interested. What possible interest could a Christian, living under the fiery persecution of Nero or Domitian, take in the Tractarian heresy? What comfort would it be to those cast to wild beasts at Ephesus to know that the Turks would batter down Constantinople? I do not think that even the prediction of the celebrated hail-storm which injured *parts* of France, on Sunday, July 13, 1788, would afford much satisfaction; or that they would fear the roaring of Leo X. against Luther half so much as the roaring of the caged monsters ready to devour them.

These things will not bear examination. The interpretation we require is one suited to those times, and to no other. If in the exposition now given there should be thought to be less similitude to Rome Pagan than to Rome Papal, I would still say, the exposition nearest to that day is the true one, and the one farthest from that day is the false one. With the secondary sense in which all this may be applied to Rome Papal I have nothing at present to do; I am only concerned with the first and obvious sense of these predictions; and I do most unhesitatingly assert, that if a contemporaneous interpretation can be found agreeing with the events predicted, such interpretation must, from the very nature of things, be the true one, and that all other can only be the mirage of the imagination, and the phantasy of the brain.

In the same vision in which St. John sees the beast, which we have explained to mean Pagan Rome, rising up out of "the sea¹," he also sees "*Another beast coming up out of the earth*"

¹ The sea is a figure constantly used in Scripture to represent the Gentile world. "The sea is come up upon Babylon" (Jeremiah, li. 42.), explained in ver. 27.—"Prepare the *nations* against her."—"The abundance of the sea shall be converted to thee," illustrated by the Hebrew parallelism—"The forces of the *Gentiles* shall come to thee." (Isaiah lx. 5.) So Rev. xvii. 15. "The waters" are said to be "*peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*," i. e. heathen nations. So "The sea" (the heathen world) "gave up the dead that were in it." (Rev. xx. 13.) which is the same idea as—"Before

—Judæa. It will be interesting to observe, that the identity which we have hitherto found to exist between the Trumpets and Vials is preserved in the present instance.

Trumpet. “I beheld *another* beast.”

Vial. “And *with him* the false prophet.”¹

T. “Coming up out of *the earth*”—Judæa.

V. Deceiving “them that dwell *on the earth*”—Judæa.

T. “He had *two horns like a lamb*, and he spake as a dragon.”

V. “The *false* prophet.”²

T. “*Deceiving* by means of . . . *miracles*.”

V. “That wrought *miracles* . . . with which he *deceived*.”³

T. “Them that dwell *on the earth*”—Judæa.

V. “Them that had the mark of the beast,” *i. e.* “*them that dwell on the earth*.”⁴

T. “He exerciseth all the power of the first beast *before him*.”

V. “That wrought miracles *before him*.”⁵

T. “He causeth the earth”—Judæa,—“and *them that dwell therein* to worship the first beast.”

V. “Them that worshipped his image⁶,” defined as “*they that dwell on the earth*”—Judæa.

T. “Saying, . . . that they should make an *image* to the *beast*.”

V. “Which had not worshipped the *beast*, neither his *image*.”⁷

T. “The *beast which had the wound by a sword and did live*.”

V. “The *beast that was, and is not, and yet is*.”⁸

him shall be gathered *all nations*,” πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Matt. xxv. 32.). So “There shall be no more *sea*,”—καὶ ἡ θάλασσα οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι (Rev. xxi. 1.)—there shall be no longer a distinction between Jew and Gentile.

¹ Rev. xix. 20.

² Rev. xvi. 13. ; xix. 20. ; xx. 10.

³ Rev. xix. 20.

⁴ Compare Rev. xiii. 14.

⁵ Rev. xix. 20.

⁶ Rev. xix. 20.

⁷ Rev. xx. 4.

⁸ Rev. xvii. 8.

T. He "caused as many as would *not worship to be killed.*"

V. "The souls of them that were *beheaded* which had *not worshipped* the beast."¹

T. "He caused all to *receive a mark.*"

V. "Them that had received the *mark* of the beast."²

T. "In their *right hand* and in their *foreheads.*"

V. "Upon their *foreheads*, or in their *hands.*"³

Here, then, are many extraordinary ideas heaped together, *ideas nowhere else found in the book*; and by an agreement of the most decided and complete kind, they are found to be repeated under both Trumpets and Vials. Indeed, we may safely say, that as the scenes and events described in the Apocalypse generally are of that unique and heterogeneous character, that no key but the true one could possibly unlock wards so peculiar and so complicated,—so no human ingenuity can account for this continuous and complete identity between the Trumpets and Vials, except on the principle that they both prefigure the same events. I can no more believe this agreement to be the result of accident or the chance position of words and ideas, than I can believe that the thoughts which now flow through my mind find their way to the oblivion or to the perpetuity to which I commit them, without intention and design on the part of the writer; and I must hope that a path has been struck out which will rescue this magnificent prophecy from the neglect with which the follies of modern interpreters have caused too many to regard it, and which may one day lead to a complete and satisfactory exposition of the whole book.

As usual, before I offer my explanation, I give the opinions of those from whom I so thoroughly and so conscientiously differ.

The wild beast rising from the sea is—the Pope.

The wild beast coming up out of the earth—the Papal clergy. The lamb-like appearance and dragon-like tongue—"their appearing to be ministers of Christ, whilst they are the ministers of Antichrist; professing to be the lambs of the Lord,

¹ Rev. xx. 4.

² Rev. xix. 20.

³ Rev. xx. 4.

whilst they are the dragons of the apostasy." The fire which they bring down from heaven—the curses and anathemas of the Church of Rome. There is an illustration given of the manner in which this fire is brought down from heaven, in the excommunication of the emperor Frederick, by Pope Innocent, at the first council of Lyons. "These words uttered in the midst of the council struck the hearers with terror as with flashing thunderbolts, when with candles lighted and flaring down, the Lord Pope and assisting prelates flashed their lightning fire against the Emperor Frederick."¹

The image of the beast is,—the general councils and synods of the Romish Church. This is considered proved, because Tertullian calls councils the very representation of the Church. The image of the beast made to speak,—the power given only to the priests to vote in a council, so that the clergy gave breath to the image of the beast *by embodying its mind!!!* The second beast causing as many as would not worship the first beast to be killed,—the great end of councils, the extirpation of heretics. And the number of the beast, 666, answering to the word *Λατρευω*, a Latin man — "because his prayers are Latin — his canons Latin — his missal Latin — his breviary Latin — his bulls Latin — he worships in Latin — he blesses in Latin — he curses in Latin — all is Latin."

Instead of saying—All is Latin—I say of this interpretation, *All is Rome*—all is bitter and uncharitable aspersion of an erring church. I should be sorry to affirm that the Papal clergy have a lamb-like appearance, and a dragon-like tongue, and that whilst they profess to be the lambs of the Lord, they are the dragons of the apostasy. Let us hope that this accusation is untrue, that many good and sincere men are to be found in their communion, and that the way to win them back from what we consider error, is not aspersion, but proof — not invective and abuse, but argument. But alas for argument such as I find in this interpretation. I shall not hope to make many converts by telling them that the fire which is made to come down from heaven is the anathemas and flashing thunderbolts of the Church of Rome; for, however the "flaring down of lighted candles by the Lord Pope and his assisting prelates" might have astonished

¹ Apocalyptic Sketches, p. 322.

the Emperor Frederick, this "lightning fire" does not flare in a sufficiently horizontal direction to enable us who are somewhat less credulous than the German sovereign, to see the agreement of these terrible coruscations with the predictions of the Apocalypse. Neither do I think that, although the clergy of the Church of Rome had power to give life to the image of the beast by *embodying its mind*,—that the clergy of Mr. Elliott's and Dr. Cumming's school will be able to give any breath to the image which they have created, or to make anything more of it than a mental incarnation of the dullest kind—a sorry log—"inutile lignum."

EMBODYING ITS MIND!!! How is this Mephistophelian process to be accomplished? First conjure up an image! Then give it a mind!! Then metamorphose it into a general council!!! And, last of all (for we do not stick at trifles) make it speak the sentiments of the Roman Catholic clergy!!!! Can we wonder that this embodiment of the theological mind of the nineteenth century has not done much to move Dr. Wiseman or Mr. Newman? Can we wonder that these master spirits should require the image of the beast to stand out in bolder relief, and the right of the clergy to be more accurately defined, ere they will be disposed to pay much heed to such expositions? I lament that such arguments as these should ever have been employed. It is an answer for the Romanist against the Protestant, that such harmless weapons should be launched against him. Every such pointless shaft and blunted arrow returns with the recoil of an accession of strength to him. He may say, and say truly, if this is all you have to urge against my religion, I shall not abandon for such proof the faith of my forefathers.

I shall now attempt what, I trust, will be considered a more reasonable exposition.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and he spake as a dragon."

"The false prophet."

The first beast rose up "out of the sea"—Heathendom; the second beast rises up "out of the earth"—Judæa. This second beast is altogether different from the first beast, which pre-

ceded him, having seven heads and ten horns ; he is described as having "Two horns like a lamb, and speaking as a dragon," meaning that his power is rather ecclesiastical than civil, that he resembles some false prophet coming in sheep's clothing, rather than any temporal or civil power. Three times he is called "*The false prophet*," and mention is often made of his working miracles, and of his deceiving by means of those miracles.

The question for us to consider is, did false prophets answering to this description arise at that time ? Our Lord predicted that such should be the case.

"There shall arise *false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders*, insomuch, that if it were possible they shall *deceive* the very elect : behold I have told you before."¹ "*False Christs and false prophets shall rise and shall show signs and wonders*, to seduce if it were possible even the elect, but take ye heed, behold I have foretold you all things."² "Take ye heed that ye be not deceived ; *for many shall come in my name*, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near : go ye not after them."³ St. Paul spake of one being revealed at that time, "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all *power, and signs, and lying wonders*, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish," and that for "this cause, God shall send them *strong delusion*, that they should *believe a lie*."⁴

It is, then, matter of fact that at the time immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem false prophets answering to the description of the second beast coming up out of the earth were to be expected.

Now, Did such false prophets, showing great signs and wonders, actually appear ? The Scriptures speak of four. Simon Magus, who "bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, this man is the great power of God."⁵ Irenæus says of him, that he "taught in Samaria that he was the Father, in

¹ Matt. xxiv. 24.

² Mark, xiii. 22, 23.

³ Luke, xxi. 8.

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 9. Compare 1 John, ii. 18—19. ; iv. 1. ; 2 John, vii.

⁵ Acts, viii. 9, 10.

Judæa that he was the Son, among the Gentiles that he was the Holy Ghost." Tertullian — "Simon Magus dared to call himself the Supreme God; he denied that any one could be saved unless baptized in his name."¹

The Scriptures also speak of "Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody."² Josephus confirms this account; he says, "A certain impostor, named Theudas, persuaded a great multitude to follow him to the River Jordan, for he said that he was a prophet, and promised to divide the river for their passage, and saying these things he deceived many."³

Mention is also made of "*a false prophet*, a Jew⁴," and of an Egyptian false prophet. St. Paul is asked, "Art not thou that Egyptian which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness 4000 men that were murderers?"⁵ The account of this Egyptian false prophet is also confirmed by Josephus: "There was an Egyptian *false prophet* which did the Jews more mischief than the former, for he was a cheat, and pretended to be a prophet also, and got together 30,000 men that were deluded by him; these he led to the mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem from that place."⁶

These impostors were so numerous, that when Felix was procurator of Judæa, he seized and put many of them to death every day; they seem, moreover, to have abounded to the last moment of the national existence of the Jews, for Josephus mentions that during the period of the siege of Jerusalem, "there were a great number of *false prophets*, suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people," and that 6000 persons perished in the fall of the burning cloisters of the temple, who had been led by *a false prophet* to expect deliverance from thence.⁷

This is confirmed by the testimony of Hermas Pastor,⁸ who

¹ "Quum Simonem Magum statua et inscriptione sancti Dei inauguratis."
— Tertull. Apol. 13.

² Acts, v. 36.

⁴ Jos. Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 5.

⁶ Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 13.

³ Acts xiii. 6.

⁵ Acts, xxi. 38.

⁷ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

⁸ "Sic probabis Prophetam Dei, et falsum Prophetam Audi nunc et de spiritu terrestri, vacuo et fatuo, virtutem non habente Tu autem crede spiritui venienti a Deo habenti virtutem, spiritui autem terrestri, vacuo,

makes repeated mention of "THE FALSE PROPHET," with whom he compares the prophet of God. He says of this false prophet, that "he destroys the senses of the servants of God," or, according to our Lord's words, that he deceives "the very elect," and that "some things he even speaks truly, for the Devil fills him with his spirit." This contemporary testimony to the declarations of the Apocalypse, showing that false prophets appeared at that time, is invaluable; for not only does it put the truth of the Scripture narrative beyond question, but it serves to show that, in those miserable times when Satan had great wrath, sorcery, witchcraft, and power to work miracles was abundantly exercised, and that false prophets deceived those that dwelt on the earth by means of those miracles which they had power to do in the sight of the beast.

One principal act of deception practised by these false prophets was to procure religious homage for the statue of Cæsar¹ :—

"Saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast. . . . And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

"Them that worshipped his image." "I saw those that were beheaded" (πεπελεκισμένοι, beheaded with an axe, a Roman punishment), "which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image."

It appears that at this time the statues and images of Cæsar were set up in every city and temple.² Josephus gives us an

qui a diabolo est, in quo fides non est neque virtus, credere noli." — Hermæ Pastor, Mand. 11.

"Et alius mendax Prophetes est, qui perdit sensus servorum Dei, . . . illi ergo dubii quasi ad Divinum spiritum veniunt, et interrogant illum, quid illis sit futurum; et ille mendax Prophetes nullam habens in se virtutem Spiritus Divini, loquitur illis secundum interrogationem illorum, et implet animas illorum promissis, sicut illi volunt. Ille autem Prophetes inanis est, et inania respondet inanibus; quidquid enim interrogatur a vanis hominibus, vana respondet illis. Quædam autem verba vera loquitur, *Diabolus enim implet eum spiritu suo*." — Hermæ Pastor, Mand. 10.

¹ "Citius denique apud vos per omnes deos quam per unum genium Cæsaris pejeratur." — Tertull. Apol. 28.

"Maledictum est ante apotheosin deum Cæsarem nuncupare." — Tertull. Apol. 34.

² "In the midst of the city thus built he (Herod) erected a very large temple to Cæsar, and laid round about it a portion of sacred land of three and

account of Caligula endeavouring to place his statue in the temple of Jerusalem. "Caius Cæsar did so grossly abuse the fortune he had arrived at as to take himself to be a god; he accordingly sent Petronius with an army to place his statues in the temple at Jerusalem, and commanded him, that in case the Jews would not submit, he should slay those that opposed it, and carry all the rest of the nation into captivity."¹ Pontius Pilate, before whom our Lord witnessed a good confession, did introduce by night these statues of Cæsar into the temple; "he sent by night those images of Cæsar, which are called ensigns, into Jerusalem." Upon another occasion, Pilate said they "should be cut in pieces, unless they would admit of Cæsar's images." This will serve to show that there is nothing improbable in the statement, that the false prophet should direct homage to the image of the beast. It would seem the Romans carried their gods into the conquered countries; "All the nations in subjection to them placed the images of Cæsar in their several cities among the rest of their gods." At a time of great and extraordinary persecution, when Nero publicly set himself against the Deity, it is certain that this practice would be continued.

The false prophet is said to "to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak." There is nothing impossible in this; sorcery, magic, possibly ventriloquism, was greatly practised at that period. The Scriptures tell us of those who "used curious arts;" of Simon's "bewitching the people of Samaria;" of "false Christs and false prophets showing great signs and wonders, deceiving, if it were possible, even the very elect;" of "God sending a strong delusion that they should believe a lie." Hermas Pastor,

a half furlongs; he called the city Sebaste, from Sebastus or Augustus."—Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 21.

"To say all at once, there was not any place in his kingdom fit for the purpose *that was permitted to be without somewhat that was for Cæsar's honour*; and when he had filled his own country with temples, he poured out the like plentiful marks of his esteem into his provinces." "And over against the mouth of the haven (Cæsarea), upon an elevation, *there was a temple for Cæsar*, which was excellent both in beauty and largeness; and therein *was a colossus of Cæsar*, not less than that of Jupiter Olympius, which it was made to resemble."—Lib. i. c. 21.

¹ Jos. lib. ii. 10.

like St. John, when he said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, for *many false prophets* are gone out into the world¹," gives directions for discerning between *the false prophet and the prophet of God*. Justin Martyr speaks of "certain men suborned by demons who said that they were gods;" he mentions that "Simon, a Samaritan, performed many magic rites of the operations of demons." And Arnobius relates of Simon's death, that "while practising magic at Rome, *in order to ingratiate*² *himself with Nero*, he attempted to fly, being assisted by evil spirits." If in our day a picture is supposed to shed a drop of blood, in those dark times there would be little difficulty in giving the appearance of life to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast should seem to speak.³

We must next allude to the punishment of those who refused to worship the image of the beast. Be it remembered we are speaking of the first systematic persecution against Christianity. Now, the usual test to which Christians were submitted was that of worshipping the statue of the Emperor or death.⁴ I have no direct proof that the Christians of that day were compelled to worship Nero's image, beyond that afforded by the Apocalypse; but I have abundant proof that Nero was the leader in their punishment, and that the worship of the statue of Cæsar preceded and followed the time of Nero.

Polycarp was submitted to this test. The proconsul said to

¹ 1 John, iv. 1.

² It is confirmatory of our position, that these magic acts should have been practised by Simon in order to *ingratiate himself with Nero*. Was it through some wish to obtain universal homage for Nero that the image of the beast was made to seem to speak and to be alive? "Hæc ne quis eum divinâ virtute putet signa facere, *sed magical operatione* — et non est mirandum si demoniis et apostaticis spiritibus ministrantibus ei, per eos faciat signa, in quibus seducat habitantes super terram." — Irenæus con Hær. lib. v.

³ By their knowledge of acoustics, the priests of ancient paganism were enabled to practise largely on the credulity of the people. Some have suggested that the speaking statues of old were but illustrations of ventriloquism. Lucian says that Alexander made his figure of Æsculapius speak, by sending his voice through the gullet of a crane.

⁴ "Πάντας τοὺς εὐσεβῶς ζῶντας ἢ θύειν ἢ τελευτᾶν καταναγκαζεν." — Martyrium S. Ignatii, ii.

"Τί γὰρ κακόν ἐστιν εἰπεῖν Κύριος Καῖσαρ καὶ ἐπιθῆσαι, καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἀκόλουθα, καὶ διασώζεσθαι." — S. Polycarpi Martyrium, viii.

"Τοῦ Κυρίου nomen, hic non simpliciter, sed pro Deo accipitur."

him, "Have a regard for your age," and adding similar expressions, *such as is usual for them to employ*, he said, "Swear by the genius of Cæsar. . . . Swear, and I will dismiss you. Revile Christ."¹

Pliny informs us that the test to which he submitted those accused persons who were brought before him was the one to which I have alluded. "I have taken this course," he says, "about those who have been brought before me as Christians. If they persevered in their confessions, I ordered them to be executed." Others, fearing the punishment, recanted; and these were compelled to worship the image of the beast. "These denied that they were Christians now, or ever had been. They called upon the gods *and supplicated to your image*², which I caused to be brought to me for that purpose, with frankincense and wine. They also cursed Christ; none of which things, it is said, can any of those that are really Christians be compelled to do. Others said they were Christians, and presently denied it again; that they had been Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some many more. One there was who said he had not been so these twenty years. *All these worshipped your image* and the images of our gods; they also cursed Christ."³

Here is a faithful commentary upon the words "As many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads."

"Neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands."

¹ Eus. lib. iv. cap. 15.

² Suetonius speaks of Tiberius as rewarding some Syrian legions because they had not displayed *the image* of his rival Sejanus on their standard, *and had not worshipped it*.—Suet. Tib. xlviii.

³ Plin. ad. Traj. Epist.

This is explained by the circumstance, that Roman slaves had their master's name or mark on their foreheads, and Roman soldiers had their emperor's name or mark on their hands. This name or mark denoted servitude and allegiance. So with this name or mark of the beast. No man might buy¹ or sell, no man might exercise the privileges of a citizen, unless he not only admitted the Roman authority, but worshipped the gods of Rome. Rome, then, as now, exercised not only universal temporal, but universal spiritual dominion. She sought to be mistress not only over the persons, but over the consciences of conquered nations. "All the nations in subjection to the Romans placed the images of Cæsar in their several cities," as all nations in connection with the Papal see are requested to be obedient to the decrees of the Vatican. Rome then, as Rome now, would be mother and mistress of the bodies and souls of men, and would sit upon the universe ("sedet super universum") as supreme.

Of the number of the beast's name, denoted by three Greek letters, $\chi\xi\zeta'$, which make up the number 666, I can only give the generally received opinions. One is, that the letters of the Greek word *Λατewos*, or a Latin man, make up the number 666; the other, that the Hebrew letters of the word Nero Cæsar answer to the same number. Either interpretation suits the view we have taken. The Greek word *Λατewos*, *Lateinus*, although it is rather an indefinite interpretation, must allude to some one connected with the Roman power. The Hebrew words *Nero Cæsar*, against which there is also the objection that they are Hebrew and not Latin or Greek words, point out the then reigning emperor as the "beast which had a wound by a sword, and did live." Bishop Newton says the word "*Romiith*" is the Hebrew word for the Roman beast or the Roman kingdom; and this, equally with the words *Λατewos*, *Lateinus*, and *נֶרֹו קֶסָר*, *Nero Cæsar*, contains the just and ex-

¹ "Non illis emendi quidquam
Aut vendendi copia
Nec ipsam haurire aquam
Dabatur licentia,
Antequam thurificarent
Detestandis idolis." — Mede, p. 509.

act number of 666. He adds: "No other word in any language whatever can be found to express both the same number and the same thing."¹

To recapitulate. Contemporary with the first beast rising "out of the sea," a second beast comes up "out of the earth." He is described as "a false prophet." His appearance as a two-horned lamb-like beast speaking as a dragon, indicates his character. He deceives all them that dwell on the earth by means of miracles. He causes them to worship the image of the beast, by showing signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, the very elect should fall away. He punishes exquisitely those who refuse submission, and makes them fall by the hands of the Roman lictors, and the number of his name (and for obvious reasons St. John did not mention him by name)

¹ The mystical definition of the name of the angel of the bottomless pit — the king of the locust army — Abaddon — Apollyon, is given in Hebrew and Greek. Rev. ix. 11. It would be analogous to look for the number of the beast's name in only these two languages.

I subjoin the explanation given by Irenæus of the number of the beast, which it will be seen is somewhat fanciful and ridiculous; and it is not unworthy of notice that the rubbish of this ancient father respecting the name of the beast immediately precedes that passage which is supposed by some to settle the question of the date of the Apocalypse in defiance of external and internal evidence to the contrary. In my own opinion, Irenæus is just as likely to be true in his conjectures respecting the number of the beast, as in his assertion respecting the date of the Apocalypse as seen in Domitian's time.

"Consequenter autem et nomen ejus habebit numerum sexcentos sexaginta sex, recapitulans in semetipso omnem quæ fuit ante diluvium malitiæ commixtionem, quæ facta est ex Angelicâ apostasiâ. Noe enim fuit annorum sexcentorum et diluvium advenit terræ, delens in resurrectionem terræ propter nequissimam generationem quæ fuit temporibus Noe. . . . Illa enim quæ fuit a Nebuchodonosor instituta imago altitudinem quidem habuit cubitorum sexaginta, latitudinem autem cubitorum sex; propter quam et Ananias, et Azarias et Misael, non adorantes eam, in caminum missi sunt ignis. . . . Sexcenti itaque anni Noe . . . et numerus cubitorum imaginis . . . numerum nominis significat illius in quem recapitulatur sex millium annorum* omnis apostasia et injustitia, et nequitia et pseudo-prophetia et dolus, propter quæ et diluvium superveniet ignis." — Irenæus, in Hær. lib. v.

* So that Irenæus, like Lactantius, believed that the world in his day was 6000 years old. This shows what amount of credit is to be given to these ancient fathers, especially on the subject of dates.

is one which applies, whether in Greek or in Hebrew, solely to the great persecuting power of Rome.

Why, then, apply this beast to the Papal clergy? Why say that they resemble this lamb-like beast in their appearance, having all the while a dragon's heart and a dragon's tongue? It is some comfort, however, to them to know, that the same voice which emits so fearful an accusation declares in the same breath that the image of the beast prefigures general councils, and that the power given to the image to speak is the right of the clergy to vote at those councils. Here they may take breath. If the one charge is most fearful, the absurdity of the rest of the exposition disarms it of its severity, and makes it appear in its true character of attack unqualified by common sense or common charity.

Such I conceive to be a fair exposition of the wild beast rising from the sea, and the wild beast coming up out of the earth. It is satisfactory to find that the vision receives a full and complete accomplishment at the period for which we contend. Let this be added to all the rest; let it be understood, that no matter how varied and how complicated the symbol may appear, that an interpretation can be found for it within the limits we have assigned; that whether the Apocalypse reveals to us locust armies or risen witnesses—whether, war in heaven, or wild beasts rising out of the earth and sea—whether, seas and rivers turned into blood, or mountains and rocks falling upon the enemies of God—whether, servants of God sealed in their foreheads, or foes of God gnawing their tongues for pain—whether it unfolds a mighty angel holding in his hand an Open book, or the woman nourished in the wilderness—whether, the temple trodden under foot of the Gentiles, or blood flowing without the city—whether, in fine, the scene be laid in earth or heaven, amidst men or angels, in the streets of burning Babylon, or within the walls of the New Jerusalem—that *an interpretation can be found for ALL within certain fixed and definite limits.*

It will be for those who examine these views to say whether it is a more correct interpretation than that which we have so often condemned. One thing seems to promise stability—it is in accordance with the aim and design of the book; it endeavours to prove what it asserts, and if it condemns the views of

others, it is not afraid to submit its own ; it is continuous and consistent ; it does not embrace a variety of catastrophes ; it sees but one object proposed throughout the pages of the Revelation, the *A* and *Ω*, the beginning and the end, of every symbol and vision, and that is, Christ is coming — the Lord is at hand to punish his enemies, and to gather his elect ; and it clings from first to last to the great truth revealed in the preface, and at the close of the Apocalypse, THAT THE PROPHECY RELATES TO IMMEDIATE EVENTS, and therefore it dares not look in the distant future for the accomplishment of things which the Spirit of God declared must “shortly come to pass.”

LECTURE XV.

BABYLON.

REV. xiv. 8.

8. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

REV. xviii. 1—24.

1. And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers, of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.

10. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

11. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth her merchandise any more :

12. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

14. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing.

16. And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls !

17. For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18. And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city !

19. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness ! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20. Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her.

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee ;

23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee : for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

THE question before us is one that has greatly perplexed commentators on the Apocalypse. That question is, What is meant by Babylon ? Is it Rome Pagan ? is it Rome Papal ? is it Je-

rusalem?¹ Moses Stuart and Professor Lee say it is Rome Pagan. To this I answer, *Rome Pagan never fell in the manner described in the Apocalypse*; and if this is to be referred to the storming of Rome by Alaric, Attila, Genseric, or Odoacer in the fifth century, it destroys all the continuous character of this prophecy — it ceases to be a grand whole; for, although in the ancient prophecies it is not an uncommon event for the prophets to foretel the future destruction of nations and cities which were suffered to punish the Jewish people, yet this prophecy begins and closes with the most solemn assurances that it refers to events which must “shortly come to pass;” and even the most superficial reader of the book must see that it cannot refer to events separated at any great distance, but to events closely connected with each other.²

Mr. Elliott, Dr. Cumming, Dr. Wordsworth, and a host of others, say that Babylon is Rome Papal. I must allow there are delicious points of resemblance almost sufficient to justify a crusade against that erring church. The name of Babylon,—“*Mystery, the Mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth.*” The supposed situation of Babylon,—that she is literally sitting on seven hills, which of course must be Rome. The woman “drunk with the blood of the saints,”—emblematical of her persecutions. The great whore clothed “with purple and scarlet,”—indicative of the gorgeous robes of her priests and cardinals;—and, lastly, the clinching argument, as it is supposed to be, Is it likely that a false system like that

¹ There is no reason why the Babylon mentioned 1 Peter, 5—13., should not be Jerusalem. That epistle is addressed to “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, &c.”—ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς.—“Christianis extra Palæstinam viventibus.” (Schleusner). If so, the Church at Babylon, which was not scattered, could only mean Jerusalem. Added to this the salutation of “the church that is at Babylon elected together with them”—is accompanied by that of Mark. Now Mark had left Paul in his work, and had “returned to Jerusalem.”—Acts, xiii. 13.

“Alii Romam, alii Hierosolymam, et ut mihi videtur rectius intelligendam esse judicant.”—Schleusner.

² The mention of the coming of Christ all throughout the book, i. 7.; iii. 11.; xvi. 15.; xxii. 20.: of the New Jerusalem, iii. 12.; xxi. 2. 10.: of the image of the beast, xiii. 14.; xiv. 9.; xv. 2.; xvi. 2.; xx. 4.: of the woes of the Apocalypse everywhere described as about to fall on them “that dwell on the earth:” of “the kings of the earth,” spoken of Rev. i. v.; Rev. vi. 15.; Rev. xvi. 14.; Rev. xviii. 3—9.; Rev. xxi. 24. This continuous mention

of Rome should prevail so extensively in the world, without any notice being taken of it in the Scriptures of Truth?¹ All this seems to carry with it a degree of probability for the supposition that the woman sitting on the seven mountains must be the great apostasy. To this I answer, *Rome Papal has not fallen—is not likely to fall*. If words mean anything, St. John could no more have thought of Rome Papal than he could have thought of London or Paris. The literal burning of Rome with fire, as an event yet to come, is what I will believe when I see it, and not before; in the meantime I shall have no objection to invest a moderate sum, provided the sale of my book will allow me to do so, in the Roman funds, or to occupy a residence for awhile on the banks of the Tiber; nay, I should not be afraid to take the Sabine farm *on a lease*, in spite of the volcanic eruption which is to overwhelm the Roman capitol. I have no doubt whatever as to what city is meant by Babylon. The only great city which fell at that time was Jerusalem. The only great city whose fall minutely corresponds with the prediction, was Jerusalem. The only great city whose fall it would have concerned the Jewish writers of the Scriptures to record, was Jerusalem. The only great city whose destruction was among “the things which must shortly come to pass” of St. John’s day, was Jerusalem. The only great city, which could claim the title of “*the holy city*,” “*the beloved city*,” “*the great city where our Lord was crucified*,” was Jerusalem. The only great city which had dominion over the kings of Judæa, as distinct from the heathen, was Jerusalem. Nay if Babylon be not Jerusalem, it may be, as some have supposed, that a new Assyrian Babylon has yet to rise from the dust, and then to be destroyed; or what is quite as probable, it may be, that Mount Vesuvius, waxing wroth against the ministers who are exclusively clothed in purple and scarlet, but who do not fare better every day than others whom we could mention, shall fulminate

of the same persons and events all throughout the book, proves to demonstration that the prophecy cannot be a chronological history of the world and the Church, but must relate to contemporaneous events closely connected with each other.

¹ The professors of the Mahometan creed are more numerous than the disciples of the church of Rome, and yet no mention is made of them; neither Constantinople, Mecca, nor Bagdad are to be burnt with literal fire.

anathemas against her equal to the desires of the most cordial haters of the papacy, and wind up the theatrical exhibitions of Exeter Hall after the fashion of similar performances, with one last brilliant conflagration of popes, and priests, and cardinals.

Pagan Rome, it is true, was sacked by Alaric the Goth, but the city did not fall. Papal Rome was stormed by the Bourbon, but the city was not destroyed. There was nothing in those vicissitudes of the eternal city to answer to the complete desolation predicted by St. John, — “A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

Jerusalem alone did so perish, and did so perish at this time. “Cæsar gave orders that they should demolish the entire city and temple. . . . It was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those believe that came thither, that it ever had been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to, a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.”¹

Another circumstance which leads to the conviction that Babylon is Jerusalem, is that both under the Trumpet and under the Vial, the fall of Babylon is immediately followed by the coming of Christ.

No sooner is it said under the Trumpet — “Babylon is fallen, is fallen,”² than the coming of Christ follows. “I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto *The Son of Man*.”³ No sooner is it said under the Vial — “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,”⁴ than the coming of Christ immediately takes place. “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, . . . and his name is called *The word of God*.”⁵

Need I point out that the destruction of Jerusalem was *immediately to precede the coming of Christ?*

“Immediately after the tribulation, of those days . . .

¹ Jos. lib. vii. cap. 1.

³ Rev. xiv. 14.

⁵ Rev. xix. 11. 13.

² Rev. xiv. 8.

⁴ Rev. xviii. 2.

they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.”¹

“*In those days, after that tribulation, they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.*”²

“*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles . . .* and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”³ Here then, to say the least of it, there is a marked coincidence between the Gospels and the Apocalypse respecting the time of that coming. In either prediction it was immediately to follow the destruction of a great city existing in St. John’s day, and the only great city which fell in his day was Jerusalem.

Another point, not altogether undeserving of notice, is that, after the destruction of Babylon or Jerusalem, St. John sees a new city come down from heaven. The name of that city is New Jerusalem. Why should this name be given, if the old Jerusalem were not the city blotted out from God’s remembrance?

This is heightened by the contrast between them,

The Old Jerusalem is the “great whore, sitting on many waters.”

The New Jerusalem is “The bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

The Old Jerusalem is spiritually called “Sodom,” “Egypt,” “Babylon.”

The New Jerusalem is “The holy city,” “that great city descending out of heaven from God.”

The Old Jerusalem is to be “utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her.”

The New Jerusalem has “the glory of God,” and her children “reign for ever and ever.”

It is difficult to account for this contrast, if Jerusalem is not the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the great city existing in the time when St. John wrote the Apocalypse, whose immediate and complete destruction he was commissioned to describe.

¹ Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.

² Mark, xiii. 24. 26.

³ Luke, xxi. 24. 27.

Of course, with Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming, Babylon is Rome Papal. As I observed, there are some points of real coincidence here, and it is not at all improbable that such should be the case. *Rome is now the legitimate scope of this prediction*; and Rome, whether of the age of Nero or of Pio Nono, must always resemble Rome. I mean, that, owing to the peculiarity of her dominant position, whether civil or spiritual, there would always exist a similarity of feature in any portrait drawn of the eternal city, whether that portrait was sketched in the days of Titus or Napoleon III.

But the grand point is, Rome has not fallen. Alaric and the Bourbon have thundered at her gates—French soldiers still occupy her palaces, but she does not fall. Her spiritual and temporal prince has been an exile and a fugitive, but her magnificence and her glory are still the same. *Jerusalem “is fallen, is fallen ;” as the city of God she fell then, never to rise again—as the city of God she is utterly prostrate now, and has remained so, in spite of every effort to the contrary, for nearly 2000 years.*

This is a difficulty which cannot be got over. Indeed to say that Rome is yet to fall and to be burnt with literal fire, is too childish for the weakest mind. Such a supposition is contrary to the immediate aim and design of the Apocalypse—is contrary to the analogy of all previous prophecy—is an event too improbable to be defended for an instant, except by fanaticism or insanity, and which owes its merciful origin, not to anything which the Word of God declares, but to the wild speculations of this unhallowed tampering with Holy Scripture. I freely confess that I lose patience with these absurd views. They afford a strong argument to the infidel that no consistent interpretation can be found for a very important part of God's Holy Word. They close the Book of Revelation against the biblical student, who is too well informed to give credit to such absurdities, and yet has no better system to substitute in their place. They cause serious and well-disposed persons to look upon the Apocalypse as a mysterious subject which they had better not meddle with. They rejoice the heart of the Romanist, for he has discretion enough to see that such fallacies will ere long be unable to abide the test of close investigation, and he knows that an unsuccessful attack is to him a victory. In our day, if a theological book is to go down with the public,

it must be all Rome! Rome! No matter how deficient in argument or how monstrous in assumption—no matter how ridiculous in theory, or how false in interpretation, it will go down with a certain class, if it is a crusade against Rome. The insane cry of “No Popery” is as grateful to some ears, *especially to those who know least about it*, as it was in the days of the Gordon riots. It is the hubbub of this absurd clamour which makes men’s ears deaf against the truth—it is the dust of this ridiculous whirlwind which blinds men’s eyes from judging fairly and impartially. Little sympathy have I with the errors of the Romish Church. The very effort of this investigation is a sufficient guarantee of the Protestantism of these views. And yet I hesitate not to say, that if Rome can only be combated with weapons drawn from the Apocalypse, she must be victorious. There is not a syllable respecting Rome Papal in the Apocalypse, from the beginning to the end, and this is what I shall proceed to prove.

I suppose it is almost needless to observe that the woman who is called Babylon, and is seated on the beast with seven heads and ten horns, does not prefigure the older and literal Babylon. “The inscription on the woman’s forehead is ‘Mystery,’ indicating a spiritual meaning; besides which, Babylon had long ceased to be a reigning city when St. John wrote: and the word ‘Mystery’ plainly intimates that, as the real Babylon was overthrown according to the prophecies of Isaiah and others in the Old Testament, so the mystical Babylon would be reduced to ruins, according to the prediction of St. John in the New.”¹

So far I agree perfectly with the above explanation of the spiritual meaning of the word Babylon. It must refer to some city existing in the time when St. John wrote, for the elder Babylon had perished.

But now comes the point at issue.

Babylon, says Dr. Wordsworth, must be Rome, because it is called by St. John “a great city.”

In the Apocalypse Jerusalem is called “a great city:”—“*That great city*, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt;” and as if this was not enough to designate it sufficiently, St. John

¹ Wordsworth’s Babylon.

adds, "*where also our Lord was crucified.*"¹ This can only mean Jerusalem.

The writers of that day called Jerusalem by this very name, "*a great city*:"—"And where now is *that great city*, the metropolis of the Jewish nation, which was fortified by so many walls round about, and had so many ten thousands of men to fight for it."²

Our position is very unassailable, when we affirm that the title of "*a great city*" belongs equally to Jerusalem as well as to Rome, for in the writings of that day and age it is spoken of under this name.³

But Babylon must be Rome, because its destruction is represented in the Apocalypse as "*followed by events which no one can say have yet taken place.*" This I will not answer here, as one of the main objects of this book is to show that, *as our Lord said*, the destruction of Babylon, or Jerusalem, was immediately followed by his coming.

Babylon must be Rome, because it is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth, "*ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς*," i. e., the city which had dominion over the princes of Palestine.⁴

¹ Rev. xi. 8.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 8.

³ Jerome says: "Jerusalem is not only in the middle of Palestine, but in the centre of the habitable world." "In medio igitur gentium posita est." — Quaresmius, Elucidatio Terræ Sanctæ, ii. 436.

⁴ The definition given of this great city, as "*the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*" (Judæa); "*the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*" (Judæa), "*with whom the kings of the earth* (Judæa) have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth (Judæa) have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication," over whom "*the merchants of the earth* (Judæa) weep and mourn," determines the question of the Babylon of the Apocalypse. If "*they that dwell on the earth*" so continually put in apposition to "*every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*," can only mean the dwellers in Judæa; if "*the kings of the earth*" put in apposition to "*the kings of the east and of the whole world*," can only mean the princes of Palestine; if "*the merchants of the earth*" put in apposition to "*the nations*" (ἔθνη), can only mean the merchants of Judæa, then the "*great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*;" "*the mother of harlots and of abominations of the earth*," with whom "*the kings of the earth have committed fornication*," must be Jerusalem.

Add to this, the king of Jericho is called "*the king of the earth*," — "*ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς γῆς*." (Clement, Epist. i. 12.) The kings of the Gentiles are properly called, "*οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν*," and not "*οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς*."

Fortunately for our exposition, the word of God tells us who are meant by the "kings of the earth." The "kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," for "against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles . . . were gathered together." Here the rulers of the Jewish nation, specified as Herod and Pontius Pilate, are called the "kings of the earth."

Under the Fifth Seal, the "kings of the earth," John and Simon, the rulers of Jerusalem, hide themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and call upon the mountains and rocks to fall on them and cover them, in the very words which our Lord said should be spoken at that miserable time.

Added to this, Josephus describes Jerusalem *as reigning over the rest of Palestine*.

"Nor indeed is Judæa destitute of such delights as come from the sea, since its maritime places extend as far as Ptolemais: it was parted into eleven portions, of which *the royal city Jerusalem was the supreme, and presided over all the neighbouring country as the head does over the body.*"¹ He elsewhere calls it "*the metropolis of the Jewish nation.*"² Tacitus says, "A great part of Judæa is composed of scattered villages; it also has larger towns. *Jerusalem is the capital city of the whole nation.*"

Scripture explains the meaning of "the kings of the earth;" and the writers of the day say, that Jerusalem was "the royal city"—"the supreme"—"the metropolis"—"the capital city"—which "presided over all the neighbouring country as the head does over the body."

But Babylon must be Rome, because she is described as sitting upon seven mountains. "Here is the mind which hath wisdom ('words which appear to predict, that, however plain they may be, they would be made by some to bear meanings *which have not wisdom* :') the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth."

(Luke, xxii. 25.) And Herod and Pontius Pilate are called "the kings of the earth." "*Principes Palæstinæ.*" — Acts, iv. 26.

An imperfect translation of the words ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, on the earth, *i. e.* THE LAND OF JUDEA, is the cause of much of the mystery of the Apocalypse.

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 3.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 8.

There is no doubt whatever but that "the seven mountains" represent Rome — the seven-hilled city, the city continually described by this well-known epithet by every poet and historian of the day — but it is not so clear that the woman sitting on the seven mountains can be Rome.

1. The seven mountains represent the seven heads of the beast, and "The beast," or "The many waters¹," is defined to mean "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," *i. e.*, heathen Rome. Now, the woman is said to sit upon the beast. This would be to make Rome sit upon Rome, and the woman to be the same as the beast on which she rides.

2. In the definition which is given of "The woman" and "The many waters" (and I consider this of great importance, because nothing is more common in the Apocalypse than an explanation given by the writer of the symbols employed.² "The waters" are said to be "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," *i. e.*, heathen nations; and "The woman" is defined to mean "That great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Judæa). Here is a contrast evident to the simplest comprehension (a contrast everywhere observable in the Apocalypse) between the heathen nations and the people of Judæa. The woman, then, cannot be Rome, unless we come to the conclusion that Jerusalem was the metropolis which presided over the heathen world.

3. Added to this, it will be clearly seen that a marked distinction is kept up between "The beast" (Rome) and "The woman carried by the beast" (Jerusalem).

"I saw a woman" (Jerusalem) "sit upon a scarlet coloured beast" (Rome).³

"I will tell thee the mystery of the woman" (Jerusalem), "and the beast" (Rome) "that carrieth her."⁴

¹ Compare Rev. xvii. 1. with Rev. xvii. 3.

² "The seven stars . . . are the angels of the seven churches." (Rev. i. 20.) "The seven candlesticks — are the seven churches." (Rev. i. 20.) "The great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt — where also our Lord was crucified." (Rev. xi. 8.) "The great dragon . . . that old serpent called the Devil or Satan." (Rev. xii. 9.) "The waters . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. xvii. 15.) "The woman . . . is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." — Rev. xvii. 18.

³ Rev. xvii. 3.

⁴ Rev. xvii. 7.

"The seven heads are seven mountains" (Rome) "on which the woman" (Jerusalem) "sitteth."¹

"The great whore" (Jerusalem) "that sitteth upon many waters" (Rome).²

"The waters" (Rome) "which thou sawest, where the whore" (Jerusalem) "sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."³

"The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast" (Rome and her allies), "these shall hate the whore" (Jerusalem), "and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."⁴

There is no great difficulty here. *The woman sitting on the seven mountains* is the woman *carried* by the beast, *sitting* on the beast, *sitting* upon many waters; — i. e. Jerusalem carried and supported by Rome; Judæa a Roman province; her princes of Roman⁵ appointment, and sometimes of Roman extraction; and her people rejecting their true king with the words "we have no king but Cæsar."

This is plain and intelligible; and, what is more to the point, in accordance with the history of the period.

But if the beast is Rome, and the woman is Rome, how can the ten horns of the beast, who "receive power as kings one hour with the beast, and who have one mind, and give their power and strength unto the beast," "hate the whore,

¹ Rev. xvii. 9.

² Rev. xvii. 1.

³ Rev. xvii. 15.

⁴ Rev. xvii. 16.

⁵ "Archelaus would not take unto him the authority of a king, or the name belonging, until Cæsar confirmed the succession; and when the soldiers would have set the diadem on his head, he would not accept of it, till the *superior lords* the Romans should have given him a complete title to the kingdom." (Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 1.) Our Saviour alludes to this appointment of the governors of Judæa by Rome, when he says, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." (Luke, xix. 12.) "Our city Jerusalem had arrived at a higher degree of felicity than any other city *under the Roman government*." — Preface to Wars of the Jews, 4. "In the mean time Antipas went also to Rome to *strive for the kingdom*." — Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 2. "Cæsar (Augustus) gave the one half of Herod's kingdom to Archelaus, by the name of Ethnarch, and promised to make him king also afterward, if he rendered himself worthy of that dignity; but as to the other half, he divided it into two tetrarchies and gave them to two other sons of Herod, the one of them to Philip, and the other to that Antipas who contested the kingdom with Archelaus." — Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 6.

and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire?" It is expressly said of these allies of Rome, that "God hath put it into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and to give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled." How can these friends and allies of Rome, who are to continue friends until the words of God shall be fulfilled, "*hate Rome and burn her with fire?*" Does not this look like an absurdity and a contradiction, that, if "God had put it into their hearts to give their kingdom unto the Beast," that they should hate and burn the metropolis of the Beast?

Or if, according to Dr. Cumming, the Beast is the Roman popes and papal Christendom, and the whore is Rome, how can Rome be said to sit upon the popes or papal Christendom? how can Rome be carried by the popes? I suppose Rome would carry the popes, and not the popes Rome; the popes would sit upon Rome, and not Rome upon the popes. Either exposition involves a serious difficulty, and, to my mind, an insurmountable one.

If, on the other hand, the woman is Jerusalem, and the Beast that carrieth her Rome, this solves at once that otherwise inexplicable difficulty of the "ten horns of the Beast, hating the whore, or Jerusalem, and making her desolate and naked, and eating her flesh, and burning her with fire." Rome and her allies, once in friendship with Jerusalem, so much so that Jerusalem might be said to be carried by Rome, did turn from this support and friendship to hate Jerusalem,—did make her so desolate and naked, as not to leave in her one stone upon another,—did eat the flesh of her kings, and captains, and great men at that awful supper of the great God,—did so burn her with fire, that it was most true of Jerusalem, that "God did deliver his most holy city to be *burnt and demolished by their enemies.*"¹

I am the more anxious to establish this point, as it has been a stumbling block in the way of previous expositors, and there appears at first sight a difficulty in understanding how the woman could sit on the seven mountains and not be Rome. But the difficulty is not so great as that view which represents the

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 8.

ten horns of Rome hating Rome, or that which represents Rome sitting on the popes.

I consider, then, that "The great whore, sitting upon many waters," "The woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast," "The woman carried by the beast," "The woman sitting on the seven mountains," "The woman hated by the ten horns of the beast," — is great Babylon, the great city which then perished, viz., Jerusalem, apostatised from God, — "The mother of harlots and abominations *of the earth*," — Judæa; "The great city which reigneth over the kings *of the earth*" — Judæa, "with whom the kings *of the earth*" — Judæa — "have committed fornication, and the inhabitants *of the earth*" — Judæa — "have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

So far carried by Rome, that her officers and kings were of Roman appointment; that their tribute money was headed by Cæsar's image and superscription; that even the power of capital punishment was taken away from them, — "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;" that the words, "I appeal unto Cæsar," could stay their wildest fury; that a Roman guard presided over the temple — a Roman procurator filled the office of judge — a Roman sentence condemned the Saviour of the world — a Roman centurion watched him on the cross — and a Roman cohort kept guard around the sepulchre. This will suffice to show how the woman was carried by the beast, and how her political existence depended on the will of the seven-hilled city.

But Babylon must be Rome, because "The woman is arrayed in purple and in scarlet colour."

Dr. Cumming says, "One need scarcely proceed to identify these. No ministers save and except those of the Church of Rome, are clothed distinctively with purple and scarlet." But purple and scarlet are mentioned here in connection with other treasures; for the woman is further described as "decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls," and verse 16. of chapter xviii. shows satisfactorily, that no particular dress of any particular clergy is here intended, but simply to enumerate *the riches of the city*, — "Alas, alas *that great city* that was clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, for in one hour *so great riches* is brought to nought."

The very nature of these riches shows that an eastern city must be meant. The fine linen, the produce of Egypt, — the scarlet and the purple, the produce of Tyre,—the gold and precious stones, and pearls, wealth peculiarly eastern — show that this description can refer to no European city.

Was this the character of the wealth of Jerusalem at this time? Josephus tells us, that after the city had been sacked and plundered, “yet was there no small quantity of the *riches* that had been in that city still found amongst the ruins. I mean *the gold and the silver, and the rest of that most precious furniture which the Jews had*, and which the owners had treasured up under ground against the uncertain fortunes of war.”¹

The same argument is condemnatory of the views of those who apply the purple and scarlet to the *imperial nature* of the city which “reigneth over the kings of the earth.” The purple and scarlet is not used as descriptive of empire, or it would not be mentioned in connection “with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.” Where the term “scarlet coloured” is applied to the beast, or Rome, it is plain it does mean *empire*. Thus, Vespasian and Titus, at the triumph, “were clothed in those ancient *purple habits* which were proper to their family.”² It is not used in this passage in connection with other terms which can only apply to riches, and therefore may fairly be interpreted of the dominion of Rome.

But Babylon must be Rome, because upon her forehead “was a name written,—Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and of abominations of the earth.” Because she was “the great whore,” with whom “the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication ;” because she has “in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.”

Dr. Cumming says, that on the ancient tiara of the Pope there was written the title, “Mystery,” and that this mystery is the distinctive characteristic of the system ; that she “is the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,” because in the creed of Pope Pius IV. the words occur, “I acknowledge the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church, the mother and

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

² Ibid.

mistress of all churches." He explains the "golden cup" in her hand, by a medal, which the Pope caused to be struck in 1825, upon one side of which was the figure of himself, and on the obverse side of that medal, a woman holding in her right hand a golden cup, with the motto, "*sedet super universum*" — "she sits upon the universe."

It will be obvious at a glance that the charge against the woman in the Apocalypse can only allude to *spiritual idolatry*, and whether the Apocalypse was written in the days of Nero or Domitian, Rome could not be guilty of such a charge. A heathen city could not with any propriety be described as "the mother of harlots, and of abominations of the earth;" neither could it be said of a heathen city, that "All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her." It is plain that the accusation of spiritual idolatry could not be laid against a city which knew not God, and that she could not be condemned on the ground of corrupting surrounding nations.

It was Jerusalem, the age and date of the Apocalypse, which answered completely and fully to this description. It was Jerusalem which deserved the title of "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and of abominations of the earth." It was Jerusalem and her inhabitants whom our Lord continually described as "an evil and *adulterous* generation." It was against the teachers of those days that he adduced the crushing charge, — "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye make clean the outside of the *cup* and the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess; . . . even so, ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity; . . . fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"¹ It was of the Jerusalem of the day of the Apocalypse, that it might be said, in the language of Ezekiel, — "Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it . . . in thy filthiness is lewdness . . . according to thy ways, and according to thy doings shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God."²

¹ Matt. xxiii. 25—33.

² Ezekiel, xxiv. 6—14.

It was of the Jerusalem of the date and age of the Apocalypse that their own historian relates: "It is impossible to go over every instance of these men's iniquity, I shall therefore speak my mind here at once, briefly, that, neither did any other city suffer such miseries, *nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness from the beginning of the world.* They brought the Hebrew nation into contempt, they confessed what was true, that they were the slaves, the scum, and the spurious and abortive offspring of our nation."¹

"I suppose," he says in another place, "that, had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening under them², or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom, for it brought forth a generation of men much more *atheistical* than those which suffered such punishments, for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed."³

Above all other cities of that age, or of any other, Jerusalem deserved the title of "*Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.*" Her inhabitants were characterised by their superabundant wickedness—a wickedness unparalleled in any preceding period of her history. The cup in her hand, although made of gold, was full of extortion and excess; full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; — "The city set on an hill that could not be hid," had become "an adulteress," with whom "the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth had been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

But Babylon must be Rome, because she abounded with "The merchandise of gold, χρυσοῦ, and silver, ἀργύρου, and precious stones, λίθου τιμίου, and of pearls, and fine linen, βύσσου, and purple, πορφύρας, and silk and scarlet, and all thyine wood⁴, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10.

² Josephus alludes to three of the most terrible judgments which God ever brought upon wicked men—the earthquake which swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; the deluge; the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone.

³ Ibid. lib. v. 13.

⁴ All thyine wood, "πᾶν ξύλον θύϊνον;" "Omne lignum citreum," every citron tree. — Schleusner.

The thyine wood, the ivory, the cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and

vessels of most precious wood, ξύλου τιμιωτάτου, and of brass, χαλκοῦ, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, κιννάμωμον, and odours, θυμιάματα, and ointments, and frankincense, μύρον, and wine, οἶνον, and oil, ἔλαιον, and fine flour, σεμίδαλι, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, κτήνη καὶ πρόβατα (large and small cattle used in sacrifice), and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.¹

Now, it is well worthy of notice that the merchandise here spoken of was chiefly employed in the service of the temple. "The Israelites brought *silver*, ἀργύρον, and *gold*, χρυσὸν, and *brass*, χαλκὸν, and of *the best sorts of wood*, ξύλα τιμιώτατα, camels' hair also, and sheep skins, some of them dyed of a blue colour, and some of a *scarlet*; some brought the flower for the *purple*, πορφύρας, colour, and *fine linen*, λίνου βύσσον, and *precious stones*, λίθους; they also brought a great quantity of *spices*, θυμιαμάτων."²

"Now, the law requires, both in public and private sacrifices, that *the finest flour* be also brought; for a *lamb*, the measure of one tenth deal; for a *ram*, two, and for a *bull*, three. This they consecrate upon the altar, where it is mingled with *oil*, ἔλαιον. They bring the same quantity of *oil* that they do of *wine*, οἶνον; but if any one brings *FINE FLOUR*, σεμίδαλι, only for a vow, he throws a handful upon the altar as its first fruits."³

"Moses now purified the tabernacle and the priests. He

frankincense, all eastern productions, confirm the position that St. John is speaking, not of an European, but of an eastern city.

¹ Rev. xviii. 12, 13.

Souls of men, "ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων," i. e. "ἀνθρώπους," men. Compare Luke, ix. 56. "οὐκ ἦλθε ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων ἀπολέσαι, ἀλλὰ σῶσαι," he came not to destroy men, but to save.

Alas for the criticism which supposes that the "souls of men" has any reference to the traffic of the Roman church in indulgences. It is not at all improbable but that slaves were publicly sold in Jerusalem, as they are to this day in Cairo or Constantinople. After the capture of the city, those that were left alive were sold. "The soldiers sold the rest of the multitude, with their wives and children, and that at a very low price, because such as were sold were very many, and the buyers very few." — Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8.

"Ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." — Deut. xxviii. 68.

² Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 6.

³ Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 9.

commanded them to take 500 shekels of choice *myrrh*, *σμυρνῆς*, an equal quantity of *cassia*, and half the foregoing weight of *cinnamon*, *κινναμόμου*, and *calamus* (this last is a sort of sweet spice), to beat them small, and wet them with a hin of *oil of olives*. There were also many, and those of various kinds, of *sweet spices*, that belonged to the tabernacle, and such as were of very great price; . . . but *incense* was to be offered, *ἔχρην θυμῶν*, twice a day, both before sunrising and at sunseting; they were also to keep *oil* already purified for the lamps."¹

It will be seen that this merchandise was chiefly required for the service of the temple, and that there is a close coincidence between the Greek of Josephus and that of the Apocalypse.

As a powerful confirmation of this position, the historian gives us an account of the triumph of Vespasian and Titus after Jerusalem was destroyed; in which it will be seen, that many of the precious things here enumerated were actually carried in triumphal procession through the streets of Rome.

"It is impossible," says Josephus, "to describe the multitude of the shows as they deserve, or the magnificence of them, for almost all the curiosities that the most happy men ever get by piecemeal were heaped upon one another; for there was to be seen a mighty quantity of *silver*, *gold*, and *ivory* contrived into all sorts of things. Some parts were composed of the rarest *purple* hangings, embroidered by the arts of the Babylonians; there were also *precious stones* that were transparent, and of these such a vast number was brought, that they were no longer rarities. The men who brought these stones were adorned with *purple* garments all interwoven with gold; but for those that were taken in the temple² at Jerusalem, these made the greatest figure of all—the golden table of the weight of many talents, the candlestick made of gold; the lamps were in number seven, and repre-

¹ Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 8.

² Tacitus says, "In that city there was a temple of immense wealth." (Hist. lib. v. cap. 8.) Dio Cassius speaks of the temple as of immense size, and most beautiful: "Cui templum summæ molis pulcherrimantque ex-truxerunt." — Dio Cass. lib. xxxvi.

sented the dignity of the number seven among the Jews ; and last of all the spoils was carried the law of the Jews.”¹

After the capture of the city, “Titus put on his soldiers’ heads crowns of *gold*, and golden ornaments about their necks, and gave them long spears of gold, and ensigns that were made of *silver* ; and besides this he plentifully distributed among them *out of the spoils and the other prey they had taken, silver, and gold, and garments.*”²

I need not point out to you the complete and perfect coincidence. We can almost take up the lamentation of the Apocalypse, — “Alas, alas that great city that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, for in one hour *so great riches* is come to nought.”³

Among the merchandise of precious things at Jerusalem particular mention is made of “*cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense.*” These, as we have seen, were required for the service of the temple. Is there proof that such precious spices were abundant in Jerusalem at this time ?

“But now at this time it was that one of the priests, the son of Thebuthus, whose name was Jesus, delivered to Cæsar certain of the precious things that had been repositied in the temple ; two candlesticks, like to those that lay in the holy house, with tables, and cisterns, and *vials, all made of solid gold*⁴, and very heavy. He also delivered to him the veils and the *garments* with the *precious stones*, and a great number of other *precious vessels* that belonged to their sacred worship.

“The treasurer of the temple also, whose name was Phineas, was seized on, and showed Titus the coats and girdles of the priests, with a great quantity of *purple and scarlet*, which was there repositied for the uses of the veil, *as also a great deal of cinnamon and cassia, with a large quantity of other sweet*

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

² Ibid. cap. 2.

³ Rev. xviii. 16.

⁴ The trumpets used in the service of the sanctuary appear to have been of silver. (Num. x. 2.) But the vials used also in the service of the temple appear to have been of *gold* : “Seven *golden vials*, full of the wrath of God.” (Rev. xv. 7.) It confirms the position that the trumpets and vials prefigure the same events to remember that the scene which introduces them is The Temple in heaven, and that trumpets and vials were both used in the service of the sanctuary.

spices, which used to be mixed together, and offered as incense to God every day.”¹

It is particularly mentioned that this merchandise was brought to Jerusalem in ships; that “the merchants of these things which were made rich by her,” wept and bemoaned her; that “every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea,” lamented her. “Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness, for in one hour is she made desolate.”²

Here the opponents of these views think they have us in a corner. How could ships, they ask, bring the wealth of the world to Jerusalem, and how could the fall of Jerusalem be a source of lamentation to as many as trade by sea? Not that they have much to boast of; for Rome, equally with Jerusalem, was not a maritime town.

But the Spirit of God does not write words in vain. The wealth of the world was brought to the seaports of Judæa, and thence to Jerusalem.

Josephus says, “Nor, indeed, is Judæa destitute of such delights as come from the sea, since its maritime places extend as far as Ptolemais.”³

And as if to anticipate this objection, it is particularly mentioned that these ships were represented in Vespasian’s triumph: “Moreover, there followed these pageants a great number of ships.”⁴

I trust I may be not considered presumptuous when I affirm that this proof amounts to demonstration. I beg of you to compare it with those views which offer no proof at all, but which utter the bare assertion that the destruction of Babylon is an event yet to take place. I do not think that Rome, with all its priestly grandeur, will be found to contain much thyine wood and ivory, and cinnamon and odours, and ointments and frankincense; still less do I expect to find in it chariots, “*ῥεδῶν*,” and human beings put up for sale. Surely it is not by accident that the account is given us of the gold and silver, and precious stones, and purple, and scarlet, and ivory, and garments, car-

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 3.

² Rev. xviii. 19.

⁴ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 5.

ried through the streets of Rome in triumph. Surely the mention of the cinnamon and cassia, and other sweet spices, is not purely accidental, nor the convincing circumstance, that the ships formed part of this splendid pageant. If all this is fortuitous, would that we had more of such fortuitous confirmation ; it might serve to remove many a deep-seated prejudice, and to establish us in the truth.

I proceed next to show that the destruction of this city was to come suddenly.

“ Her plagues shall come in *one day*.”

“ In *one hour* is thy judgment come.”

“ In *one hour* so great riches is come to nought.”

“ In *one hour* is she made desolate.”

This is not true of Rome Pagan. No such sudden destruction fell upon it ; it died a natural death, slowly and gradually. This is not true of Rome Papal ; it has never fallen.

It is true of Jerusalem. Our Lord said its destruction should be sudden : “ Watch, therefore, *for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*” “ *In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.*” “ Take ye heed lest that day come upon you unawares ; for *as a snare* shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”

Did the destruction come thus suddenly ?

Josephus says, “ They were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were *on a sudden* shut up by an army, which occasioned a pestilence, and afterward such a famine as destroyed them *more suddenly.*”¹

“ *The entire nation was shut up by fate as in a prison ; the Roman army encompassed the city when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly, the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either men or God ever brought upon the world.*”²

There is no other record in the history of the world of a nation perishing at a blow. The Roman tyrant wished that mankind had but one neck, that he might extirpate the human race. The Jewish people had but one neck. The blow was struck on

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.

² Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 9.

a sudden, when the Jewish capitol contained within its walls the Jewish nation ; when “ they were come up *from all the country* to the feast of unleavened bread ;” when “ the *entire nation* was shut up by fate as in a prison ;” and as a nation the Jews became extinct. Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, lingered for years after the periods of their desolation. Not so Jerusalem ; as a nation the Jews are not heard of again. They are spared in isolated grandeur to be witnesses for God’s truth all over the world, as at this day ; but their nationality fell with the destruction of their city, perhaps never again to be restored.

Next observe the nature of her destruction.

“ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day : death, mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire.” ¹

“ *Death.*” Was this fulfilled at that period ? Did Death on a pale horse, followed by Hades, or the grave, ride ruthlessly over his innumerable victims ? Was “ the winepress trodden *without the city*, till blood came out of the winepress even unto the horse bridles ;” and were “ all the fowls of the air called to the supper of the great God ?” “ The number of those that perished during the whole siege was 1,100,000 ; the greatest part of whom were of the same nation with the citizens of Jerusalem, but not belonging to the city itself.” ² “ The multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either men or God ever brought upon the world.” Nay, “ had not the Lord shortened the days, there had *no flesh* been saved ; but for the elect’s sake he hath shortened the days.” ³

“ *Mourning,*” “ *πένθος :*” “ deploratio obitus propinquorum et amicorum conjunctissimorum :” intense grief and mourning on account of lost friends.—*Schleusner*. Was this the case ? Was the valley round Jerusalem an Armageddon ? Was there “ in that day a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon ?”

Read the history of the times, and judge. “ A deserter

¹ Rev. xviii. 8.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.

³ “ From the beginning to the conclusion of the Jewish war, Justus Lipsius has calculated the number of the slaughtered Jews at 1,337,490 ; but if to these be added those who died in caves, woods, wildernesses, in banishment, and as prisoners, the amount cannot be less than a million and a half.”

came to Titus, and told him that there had been carried out of *one gate* entrusted to his care, 115,880 dead bodies in 2½ months."

"After this man there escaped to Titus many of the eminent citizens, and told him that no fewer than 600,000 were thrown out at the gates, and the number of the rest could not be discovered."¹

"Titus, in going his rounds along those valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefaction running from them; he gave a groan, and, spreading out his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing."²

No such mourning ever took place before or since. "In those days shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."³

"*Famine.*" "A medimnus (bushel) of wheat was sold for a talent," 375*l.*; "and that when awhile afterward it was not possible to gather herbs, by reason of the city was all walled about, persons were driven to that terrible distress as to search the common sewers, and old dunghills of cattle, and to eat the dung which they got there."⁴

Josephus also gives us the terrible story of a woman eminent for her wealth and family, discovered in the act of eating her own child.

The famine, he tells us, "pierced through her very bowels and marrow," till, unable to bear the gnawing of that agony, she destroyed and eat the son of her womb. She is discovered by the bands of famine-stricken murderers who were roaming through the city for food, who smelling the horrid scent, threatened her that they would cut her throat unless she showed them what food she had gotten. She uncovers what is left of her own son, with the dreadful words, "This is mine own son, and what has been done was mine own doing; come eat of this food, for I have eaten of it myself. Do not pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother."⁵

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 13.

² Mark, xiii. 19.

³ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 3.

² Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 12.

⁴ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 13.

It is recorded that when the Romans had come within the walls, and had begun their work of plunder, "They found in the houses entire families of dead men, and *the upper rooms*¹ *full of dead corpses of such as died by the famine*; they stood in horror at the sight, and went out without touching anything."²

This is abundantly proved. Under that terrible pressure, "The eye of the tender and delicate woman, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness, was evil towards her children, and she eat them, for want of all things, *secretly*, in the siege and straitness wherewith the enemy distressed the gates."³

"*Burning with fire.*" "She shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." "And when the shipmen saw the smoke of her burning, they cried, What city is like unto this great city?"

Our Lord said that Jerusalem should be burned with fire. "He sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and *burned up their city.*"⁴

It is to this burning that St. Paul alludes.⁵

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, *in flaming fire*, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

Was Jerusalem thus burnt *with fire*? Was the Lord Jesus revealed at his coming to take vengeance on them that knew not God, "*in flaming fire*?"

We must look for the answer in Josephus. "One would have thought that the hill on which the temple stood was seething hot as full of fire on every part of it." "And now the Romans, judging it was in vain to spare what was round the holy house, *burnt* all these places; they also *burnt* down the treasury chambers, in which there was an immense quantity of

¹ "Λούσαντες δὲ αὐτὴν ἔθηκαν ἐν ὑπερώω." — Acts, ix. 37.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8.

⁴ Matt. xxii. 7.

³ Deut. xxviii. 56.

⁵ 2 Thess. i. 7.

money, and garments, and other precious goods ; in a word, the entire riches of the Jews heaped up together.”¹ Afterwards, “Titus gave orders to the soldiers *to burn* and to plunder the city, who did nothing indeed that day, but on the next day *they set fire* to the repository of the archives, to Acra, to the council house, to the place called Ophlas, to the palace of Queen Helena, which was in the middle of Acra. The lanes also *were burnt down*” (*i. e.* the narrow streets, in opposition to the *πλατεῖα*, the broad market place), “as were also the houses that were full of the dead bodies of such as were destroyed by famine.”²

“Accordingly, as the people were now slain, the *holy house was burnt down, and the city was on fire*, there was nothing further left for the enemy to do.” “And as *all was burning* came that eighth day of the month Gorpheius (Elul) upon Jerusalem.”³

“God who of old had taken the Jewish nation into his favour, had now condemned them to destruction, for had he either continued favourable, or been but in a lesser degree displeased with us, he had not overlooked the destruction of so many men, or delivered his most holy city *to be burnt and demolished by our enemies.*”⁴

These four sore judgments, “Death, mourning, famine, and burning with fire,” were fulfilled in the case of no other city so completely as in the case of Jerusalem. Rome never experienced these miseries ; there is no record of Rome being burned with fire, or desolated to this extent by famine ; Rome’s plagues never came in one day, *i. e.* in the briefest possible space of time. All this is true *only* of that city for which we plead. “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, mourning, and famine, and burning with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

But we are told this great city must be Rome, because she is “drunk with the blood of the saints ;” because “in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

Dr. Cumming says, “Need I verify this characteristic of

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

³ Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 8.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 6.

⁴ Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 8.

the Church of Rome? The sounds of the Sicilian vespers have not yet died away upon the ear; the blood that stained the fertile soil of France may be concealed by vineyards, and by the golden corn that grows upon its surface, but it is seen by God, and will be remembered in the hour of his judgments. The Marian reign in our own country and Smithfield are not yet forgotten by those to whom Foxe's Book of Martyrs is anything more than an old almanac."

Rome, it is true, Pagan and Papal, has been a furious persecutor of the Church; there is not an era in her history, from the exile into Patmos to the imprisonment of the Madiari, in which she has not been drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

But was Jerusalem no persecutor of the Church—was not the blood of prophets and saints found in her?

"It cannot be," said our Lord, "that a *prophet perish out of Jerusalem*."¹

He thus apostrophised her—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *which killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee*."

"*Which of the prophets*," asked Stephen of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One."²

And, mark, no other city but Jerusalem has been drunk with the blood of "apostles and prophets"—of "prophets and saints"—of martyrs of the old and the new dispensation. Of no other city could it be said, "Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

Rome Pagan was drunk with the blood of Apostles—Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom there. Nero, Domitian, and others, set themselves against the supreme God, and made havoc of the Church of Christ. But which of the prophets of the Old Testament perished at Rome? Was Isaiah sawn asunder in the Forum, or Jeremiah cast into his pit in the Capitol? While the charge of persecution of the Apostles can be fully made out against Rome Pagan, it would be diffi-

¹ Luke, xiii. 33.

² Acts, vii. 52.

cult to say in what respect Rome Pagan was a persecutor of the prophets. So of Rome Papal; she has shed Christian blood in torrents, but no charge of persecution against the prophets of old can be laid at her door.

Jerusalem alone stands out in guilty pre-eminence, as the murderess of *apostles and prophets*—as the persecutor of the *old and new dispensation*—as “drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,”—in her “was found the blood of prophets and of saints.” Of Jerusalem alone could it be said, “Rejoice over her ye holy *apostles and prophets*, for God hath avenged you on her.” The Jews only were guilty of this double murder—“Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us.”¹

And observe, also, vengeance was required from no other city but Jerusalem. “God hath avenged you on her”—“He hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.” No vengeance for torrents of Christian blood has been taken on Rome, Pagan or Papal. *But such vengeance was taken on Jerusalem*, “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar; verily I say unto you all these things shall come upon this generation.”

Need I tell you, how unmistakeably the prophetic warning, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues,” was fulfilled in the history of those times? Need I say that a higher voice than “Robert M’Ghee’s” fulminating anathemas relating to the Jews of the first century against Christians of the nineteenth, had previously uttered similar warnings?

“When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.”²

Need I say, what I have so often repeated, that every opportunity for escape was afforded to the Christians, and that they left Jerusalem as men leave a sinking ship? “After this

¹ 1 Thess. ii. 15.

² Luke, xxi. 20, 21.

calamity had befallen Cestius, many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city, as from a ship when it was going to sink ;”¹ and that Eusebius records the fact, “The whole body of the Church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan called Pella.”²

One other point must not be overlooked, and it is this. *That great city, even to the last moment of her existence, was not aware of the destruction about to come upon her.* The same insensibility to her approaching desolation which characterised her inhabitants in our Lord’s day, and to which he so pathetically referred, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes,”³ was persisted in to the end. Even when her hour was come, “She said in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”

Did such fancied security prevail at this time in the minds of that chosen people whose boast it was that “they never were in bondage unto any man?” Let our unconscious witness give the answer. “But the tyrant, John, added this withal that he did never fear the taking of the city, *because it was God’s own city.*”⁴

“As to the people, he (Titus), had them of a long time ready to comply with his proposals [of surrender], but as to the fighting men, this humanity of his seemed a mark of his weakness, and they imagined that he made these proposals *because he was not able to take the rest of the city.*”⁵

And even when their temple was in flames, and their city all but destroyed, “a false prophet made a public proclamation in the city that very day that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance.”⁶

It only remains for me to notice *the complete and utter desolation of this great city.*⁷

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 20.

² Luke, xix. 42.

³ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 8.

⁴ Rev. xviii. 21, 22, 23.

⁵ Eus. lib. iii. cap. 5.

⁶ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 2.

⁷ Ibid. lib. vi. cap. 5.

"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.¹

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Rome Pagan or Papal never fell like this; it always rose again from its reverses, and is at this moment not only a city of great importance in an ecclesiastical point of view, but a city entitled to consideration as one of the magnificent capitals of Europe.

But, says Dr. Cumming, she is yet to fall — she is to be literally burnt with fire. I give his own words respecting this literal burning of poor Rome, which is yet to take place.

"I believe that Rome will be destroyed by literal fire. Rome itself is placed upon the ashes of a volcano. It is stated that the whole chain of the Apennines which stretches across Italy is volcanic. This seems as if it were a preparation for future judgments: *and her desolation shall be so sudden that it shall come in one day, and not 'leave a rack behind.'* It is followed by its smoke ascending up for ever and ever, and hence the conclusion is forced upon the mind, that Rome is to be overthrown by judgments, and not to be converted by the agency of the Gospel — *she is literally to be consumed by fire.*"²

Alas poor Rome — alas poor Pope — alas poor cardinals, — and ye, ye dukes and duchesses, and lords and ladies, who listen to these alarming predictions, and yet, in spite of these denunciations, spend a few months every year in your Tuscan villas, or amidst the departed glories of the Coliseum. Do ye not fear the sudden earthquake — the irruption of this terrible

¹ "And it shall be when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her." — Jer. li. 63, 64.

² Apocalyptic Sketches, p. 437.

volcano? Do ye not see it written on the scarlet robes of the cardinals, on the tiara of the Pope, that Rome is "Great Babylon," and that she is too horribly lost ever to be converted—but that she must BURN—BURN—BURN? Do ye not regard the warning, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues?" Do ye not hear the "voice that is sounding now through the length and breadth of the very land in which we live?" I believe, in spite of your pretended admiration, ye are as deaf as I am; and that in your hearts ye regard this terrible anathema as a harmless and idle declaration, happy if it shall escape the sentence of impiety, from its daring flight into scenes yet supposed to be future, and from its bold presumption in pronouncing upon events which it imagines are yet to come to pass.

But to return. Did Jerusalem fall like this? Was "that great city Babylon thrown down with violence, and found no more at all?" Did "her smoke rise up for ever and ever?" and did she "become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird?"

Jerusalem fell so completely, so helplessly, was so "torn up to its foundations, that they who came to see it after the Romans had finished their work of destruction, could not believe that it ever had been inhabited."¹ "Where is now *that great city*, the metropolis of the Jewish nation, which was fortified by so many walls round about; which had so many fortresses and large towns to defend it; which could hardly contain the instruments prepared for the war, and which had so many ten thousands of men to fight for it?—Where is this city that was believed to have God himself inhabiting therein? *It is now demolished to the very foundations*, and hath nothing but that monument of it preserved, I mean the camp of those that have *destroyed* it, which still dwells upon its *ruins*: some unfortunate old men also lie upon the ashes of the temple; and a few women are there preserved alive of the enemy, for our bitter shame and reproach." "They shall lay thee even unto the ground, and thy children within thee; they shall not leave on

¹ Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 1.

thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation."

As the city of God, Jerusalem perished, never again to be restored. At the present day, nearly 2000 years since this desolation took place, it is only the wreck, the shadow of departed greatness. *As the city of God* it is found no more at all. The Jew exists there on sufferance; contending sects of Christians squabble about petty differences; and the Turk, the haughty master of the spot, worships Mahomet on the very altar of Jehovah.

There it is, "thrust down with violence," "found no more at all." "Harpers¹ and musicians, and pipers and trumpeters," no more pealing their hallelujahs along the aisles of God's holy house; "no craftsman, of whatsoever craft," working silk and purple hangings for the veil. The "voice of the bridegroom² and of the bride," hushed and still. The deep and pathetic words, so often repeated here, "*No more at all*," gathering an intense and awful meaning from their stern reality. Where the Jew was lord and prince he is now servant and slave—where he was king and priest, he is "the offscouring of all things *unto this day*."

His city perished, and has not been rebuilt.

His temple perished, and has not been restored.

His religion perished, and has not been renewed.

His nation perished, and has not been gathered again.

This, I confidently affirm, can *only* be said of the Jew and

¹ "The voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee." This refers to the musicians employed in the service of the temple. Josephus relates, "The *harpers also*, and the singers of hymns, came out with *their instruments of music*, and begged the multitude not to provoke the Romans to carry off these sacred treasures."—Lib. ii. cap. 15.

² "The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee." Compare the language of the warning cry of one of Christ's witnesses: "A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people." (Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.) "And the light of a candle shall shine no more in thee." Compare Matt. xxv. 1. Where lamps are carried by the bridal party to meet the bridegroom.

Jerusalem.¹ “A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea: saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

¹ “Dispersi, palabundi, et cœli et soli sui extorres vagantur per orbem sine homine [nomine], sine Deo rege, quibus nec advenarum jure terram patriam saltem vestigio salutare conceditur.” — Tert. Apol. 20.

LECTURE XVI.

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

REV. xiv. 14—20.

14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice, to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap ; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped.

17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

SEVENTH VIAL.

REV. xix. 11—21.

11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood ; and his name is called the Word of God.

14. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ;

18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and

the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great.

19. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

In our last lecture we entered at some length into the much disputed question of Great Babylon. We showed, and I trust successfully, that great city to have been neither Rome Pagan nor Rome Papal, but Jerusalem. Indeed, when it is remembered that only one city is spoken of in the Apocalypse as about to experience the wrath of God, and that city is defined by such terms as "*That great city*" — "*The holy city*" — "*The beloved city*" — "*The city to be trodden down of the Gentiles*" — "*The great city where also our Lord was crucified*" — "*That great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*" (Judæa)—and when to this is added the complete and magnificent confirmation of the fall of that great city from the pen of the only man capable of giving such an account, who says of that memorable siege, that "*during that time nothing was done which escaped his knowledge*," it would seem as if the Providence of God had so heaped up irrefragable testimony that no stand could possibly be made against it.

It is not a little remarkable that before the vision of this great city is given to St. John, he is "*carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness*,"¹ (a sufficiently clear intimation that a

¹ Compare "Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος." —Matt. iv. 1.

communication connected with Judæa and Jerusalem is about to be vouchsafed unto him) and there he sees the woman sitting on the scarlet-coloured Beast whose desolation he so minutely and so graphically predicts. Now when the symbol of Pagan Rome was presented to the mind of the same Apostle, it is said that "*he stood upon the sand of the sea, (the sea being constantly used in Scripture to denote the heathen world) and saw a Beast coming up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns.*" In the present instance the vision relates to Judæa and Jerusalem, and therefore he is most appropriately "*carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness.*"

But not to recapitulate the evidence adduced in the preceding chapter, I shall merely answer the objection which might be urged against the view now taken of Great Babylon, *that she is not so utterly fallen as she is represented in this description.*

It is true "wild beasts of the forest" do not dwell on the site of Jerusalem as on the site of ancient Babylon, and she is not literally "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." In one sense, her fall does not come up to the imagery borrowed from the fall of ancient Babylon, *although she was as utterly destroyed at that period*; and, indeed, I have had to answer the silly objection, that because in a city of 30,000 inhabitants, such as Jerusalem now is, the voice of the bridegroom and the bride might be heard from time to time, therefore she did not fall. It is *as the city of God* that she is "fallen, is fallen." It is *as the dwelling-place of Jehovah* that she is "found no more at all." It is as the *metropolis of the Jewish nation* that she is "thrust down with violence." It is as "*the joy of the whole earth*" that her "smoke rises up for ever and ever." At the date and age of the Apocalypse she was a heap of ruins; for Terentius Rufus, the Roman officer left in charge of Jerusalem, ploughed up the foundations of the temple, according to the prophecy of Micah¹ — "Zion shall be ploughed as a field;"² and no desolation could possibly be more com-

¹ Micah, iii. 12.

² Pausanias, who wrote A. D. 180, speaks of a monument of Queen Helena at Jerusalem, which city an emperor of the Romans *destroyed to the foundations*: —

"Ἐλενης δὲ γυναῖκος ἐπιχωρίας τάφος ἐστὶν ἐν πόλει Σολύμοις, ἣν ἰς ἔδαφος κατέβαλεν ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεύς." — Paus. viii. cap. 16.

plete. *As the city of God*, her desolation is as complete *now* as it was *then*. *As the city of God*, Jerusalem was to lie prostrate, and to lie prostrate for ever. Has this been the case? is this the case now?

First, the Jews themselves attempted the restoration of their city. "The dispersed Jews began to multiply, and in the course of a century made many attempts to reinstate themselves in the city of their forefathers, and as their numbers increased, they openly rebelled against the Roman power. Hadrian sent against them Julius Severus, who utterly routed them. 50 of their best forts, 985 of their finest and best towns, were utterly destroyed, so that Judæa was left little better than a desert. Hadrian afterwards built a new city upon Acra, which he called *Ælia* after his own name. Here he founded a Roman colony, and erected a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, and afterwards another to Venus; the former near Moriah, the latter on Calvary. He also issued an edict by which he not only prohibited the Jews from entering Judæa, but denied them even the sight of it from a distance; but, before this period, it appears that only upon one day in the year they were permitted to shed tears over the place where their temple formerly stood."¹

Then came Julian² the apostate, endeavouring to rebuild the temple, hoping to overthrow the religion of Jesus by the erection of that temple of which our Lord said, "there shall not be left one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down." But history tells us that flames of fire bursting out from the foundations "rendered the place inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and in this manner, the fire obstinately and resolutely repelling them, the work ceased." Be this true or not, the grand fact remains the same, the temple has never been rebuilt.

Then the heroic champions of the cross, the mailed crusaders,

¹ Archdeacon Wilkin's *History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*, p. 176.

² "Ambitosum quoddam templum apud Hierosolimam sumptibus immodicis instaurare cogitabat, negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochenai — cum itaque rei idem fortiter instauret Alypius, juvaretque provincie rector, metuendi globi flammarum prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes fecere locum, exustis aliquoties operantibus, inaccessum: hocque modo elemento destinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum." — Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiii.

This event is confirmed by Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen.

fainting beneath their iron panoply, yet resolved to plant the cross above the crescent, and to win back the holy city from the polluting grasp of the infidel. Vain efforts, vain expenditure of blood and zeal. Babylon was to be "thrown down," "to be found no more at all;" her "smoke was to rise up for ever and ever," and the religious enthusiasm of assembled Europe could not prevail above the righteous judgments of God.

In our own day and our own times a mission of a different kind is hoping to accomplish the same result by different means. My impression is, that if they seek the literal restoration of Jerusalem they will fail of their purpose. If they expect that Zion is yet to rise from the dust and to become once more *the city of God*, they will find they have not sufficiently weighed the judgments of God respecting her. Hitherto their palpable want of success is matter of public notoriety¹, and the premature establishment of an episcopal seat at Jerusalem seems to be rather a gratification of Protestant pride than real and substantial progress in the work of evangelising the Jews. In whatever way the Jews will be gathered into Christ, I do not look for the literal restoration of the holy city; and 2000 years of past desolation is presumptive proof, that if Jerusalem shall share the common blessings of Christianity which are likely to pervade the East, she will share them in the same degree with the rest of mankind.

Mark, then, *as the city of God*, Jerusalem has lain prostrate for nearly 2000 years. Romans, Saracens, Egyptians, Mamelukes, Franks, and Turks, have said their orisons within her walls; but the Jew, according to our Lord's words, "neither in Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem, has worshipped the Father." *As the city of God*, Jerusalem is prostrate now. Her name is Ichabod, for the glory has departed. The kingdom of Christ is set up, its bounds are only circumscribed by the habitable globe; but Jerusalem has not risen from the dust, and the streets of the daughter of Zion do not resound with Hosannahs to his name. It is the finger of God. Every Jew you meet with tells you that God's word is truth; every child of Abraham, without home, country, temple, altar, standing by

¹ I am given to understand, on good authority, that there are not more than one hundred Jewish members of the Protestant church in Jerusalem.

himself in isolated grandeur, repeats the lesson of the Apocalypse, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." "Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." "And her smoke rose up for ever and ever."

Our immediate subject is The Coming of Christ, which was to succeed the fall of Babylon. And here I once more call attention to the argument which I have pursued throughout this interpretation, viz., the identity between the Trumpets and Vials. It must be kept in mind that we are still interpreting the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial. The fall of Babylon has already been described by each, the only difference being that the Vial extends over the minute particulars of that fall, which the Trumpet does not.

Trumpet. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

Vial. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

T. "That great city."

V. "Babylon the great."

T. "Because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

V. "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

This literal and verbatim description of the fall of Babylon under the Trumpet and Vial is immediately followed by The Coming of the Son of Man; and here again the exemplification of this duplicate principle is clear and decided, and Trumpet and Vial alike describe that awful coming with marks of undisguised coincidence.

Trumpet. "Behold a white cloud."

Vial. "Behold a white horse."

T. "Upon the cloud one sat."

V. "He that sat upon him."

T. "Like unto THE SON OF MAN."

V. "His name is called THE WORD OF GOD."

T. "On his head a golden crown."

V. "On his head were many crowns."

T. "In his hand *a sharp sickle.*"

V. "Out of his mouth goeth *a sharp sword.*"

T. "And the *winepress was trodden.*"

V. "He *treadeth the winepress.*"

T. "The *great winepress of the wrath of God.*"

V. "The winepress of *the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*"

T. The vine of *the earth trodden without the city.*

V. The kings of *the earth* and their armies slain.

T. *Blood* flows to the horse bridles.

V. The fowls of the air gathered to *the supper of the great God.*

This identity I am also content to leave without comment, simply observing that in each of the Trumpets and Vials some *new* idea, not before mentioned in the Book, is generally developed. I need only allude to the same Trumpets and Vials pouring out their contents upon the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun, and to the circumstance of the Euphrates, Babylon and Rome, introduced for the first and only time into their respective Trumpets and Vials, to show the correctness of this observation. We may add to this the detailed account given in this Trumpet and Vial of the coming of Christ, *a description nowhere else given in the Book.*

I do not know that I have much to explain in this Trumpet and Vial.

"*The white cloud,*"¹—the chariot of the Deity. "*A cloud,*" at his ascension, "received him out of their sight;" and the promise was given, "this same Jesus which is taken up from

¹ Under the Trumpet the Son of man is described as sitting on "*a white cloud,*" under the Vial on "*a white horse.*" This cannot be taken literally, for he could not be sitting upon a white cloud and a white horse at the same time; and possibly nothing more is intended to be conveyed than his coming as a conqueror with power and great glory. The very vagueness of the descriptions serves to show that a literal coming with clouds was not the thing signified.—Compare Jer. iv. 13., where the Babylonians, who execute God's wrath against the Jews, are said to come "as clouds." "Behold, he shall come up *as clouds,* and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind."

you into heaven shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts i. 11.)

"*The white horse*"¹—the emblem of victory. So Vespasian goes forth on a "white horse conquering and to conquer."

The titles, "*The Son of Man*," "*The Word of God*,"—titles belonging exclusively and solely to Christ.

"*The golden crown*," and "*The many crowns*,"—expressive of "the power and great glory" of his coming.

"*The armies in heaven*,"—The coming of the Son of Man in the glory of his Father, "*with all the holy angels with him*."

"*The sharp sickle*," "*The sharp sword*,"—the terribleness of his avenging wrath upon the disobedient Jews.

"*The winepress of the wrath of God*," "*The winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*,"—that bitter desolation and affliction, "such as was not from the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be."

"*Blood coming out of the winepress unto the horse bridles*," — "The destruction which exceeded all the destructions that either God or men ever brought upon the world."²

"The fowls of the air called to *the supper of the great God*,"—the Roman eagles fattening on the flesh of kings and captains; "For wheresoever the carcase is there will the eagles be gathered together."³

But what becomes of that continuous history of the world and of the Church which we have been endeavouring to expose? According to those views the first coming of Christ under the Trumpet must be altogether distinct from the second coming under the Vial. Perhaps, with Cornelius à Lapide, Dr. Cumming thinks that there are in this Book "anticipations, recapitulations, omissions, and again retrogressions and repetitions of the same events, and moreover sudden transitions." Perhaps he

¹ "St. Jerome speaks of the white horse as the body of our Lord assumed after the resurrection, and those that follow with white horses, as with bodies like himself, immortal and incorruptible." — Apocalypse, by the Rev. Isaac Williams, p. 397.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.

³ Matt. xxiv. 28.

imagines, with Victorinus, that St. John "is ever recapitulating from the beginning." Whatever he thinks he does not express it; for he gives us no account of this coming under the Trumpet. I suppose, according to his plan, he could not very well tell what to make of it. According to his system it must have happened somewhere between the days of Luther and the French Revolution, for it follows the resurrection of the Witnesses, and precedes the pouring out of the Vials. I wonder to what it could possibly refer.

The object of this Lecture will be to show that our Lord came, *as he said*, to destroy Jerusalem, and to close the Jewish dispensation, and that agreeably to the prediction of the Apocalypse, "The Son of Man," — "followed by the armies of heaven," — "reaped the harvest *of the earth*," Judæa — "trode the winepress *without the city*," Jerusalem — "and gathered the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven unto the supper of the great God."

And before entering upon the subject may I be excused for saying that a more momentous subject, both in itself and in its consequences, does not exist in the whole range of theology. If true, the belief in an advent yet to take place must be erroneous; if false, it ought to be refuted, and surely those are to be found who shall be able to demonstrate its incompatibility with the general tenor of God's Holy Word. If true, its principles ought not to be held *in silence* by those to whom truth is dearer than place or position; if false, no punishment is too great for so daring an innovation upon established orthodoxy. In a word, this chapter must either be answered, or else its views must be adopted. There is no alternative, — if Christ has come the second time, he cannot come again; and if his kingdom is now set up, it is folly to look for the establishment of another upon earth.

Let us approach the consideration of it in deep humility and earnest prayer, beseeching Him "who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood," to open to us by his Spirit the sealed book of his mysterious coming, "granting us in this world *knowledge of his truth*, and in the world to come life everlasting."

There is an expression here, incidentally given, which defines the object for which Christ came. It is said, "The winepress was trodden *WITHOUT THE CITY*." *What city?* Rome, Paris,

London, or Constantinople? It is plain, then, that the coming of our Lord has to do, in this vision, with the destruction of *a particular city*. That it must have been local, not general—specific and definite, not universal. That it cannot be made to refer to the proceedings of the so-called general judgment, unless we suppose the events of that great day of assize to be associated with the desolation coming upon some particular city.

Now the only city he came to destroy was Jerusalem.

So the enemies of Stephen represented him as saying “Jesus of Nazareth *shall destroy this place*.”¹ So our Lord himself declared, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,” &c., “behold your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, *ye shall not see me henceforth*” (ἀπ’ ἄρτι, *from just now*) “till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”²

Another circumstance which serves to point out the time and object of his coming, is, *that it is spoken of in connection with most terrific desolation*. Blood is said to flow out of the winepress³ unto the horse-bridles. All the fowls of the heaven are said to be gathered to the supper of the great God.

Now, this desolation corresponds exactly with the “tribulation” of those days. In spite of the description of the terrific battle of Armageddon described in the pamphlet called the “Coming Struggle,” no man possessed of common sense will believe that such a scene as is here depicted can ever happen again on earth. The refinement of modern warfare (as abundantly evidenced in the present unhappy contest) negatives such

¹ Acts, vi. 14.

² Matt. xxiii. 37, 38, 39. The inference is that the period when they would see him again after the short interval described by the words ἀπ’ ἄρτι, *from just now*, would be the time when “their house (temple) was left unto them desolate.” So Luke, xiii. 35. “Behold your house (temple) is left unto you desolate, and verily I say unto you, *ye shall not see me* until the time come, ἔως ἂν ᾗξῃ, when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

³ Not only is the winepress said to be trodden *without the city* (Jerusalem) but the vine which pours out blood out of the winepress is said to be “the vine of the earth, τῆς γῆς, Judæa.” “Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth—τῆς γῆς, Judæa, for her grapes are fully ripe; and the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, εἰς τὴν γῆν, Judæa—and gathered the vine of the earth—τῆς γῆς, Judæa. . . . and the winepress was trodden *without the city*.”—Rev. xiv. 18, 19, 20.

a supposition. But there was a time when this desolation was fulfilled to the very letter; when Christ came, as he said, "*miserably to destroy these wicked men*" — when the winepress¹ was trodden "*without the city*," and blood, not wine, came out of the winepress in such quantities, that it reached to the "horse-bridles² by the space of 1600 furlongs."³

I need not say that this desolation had its complete accomplishment at that time. Then, in the words of the faithful historian, who little suspected the confirmation his words would give to the sayings of Christ, "The Romans went in numbers through the lanes of the city, with their swords drawn: they slew everyone they overtook without mercy . . . and made the whole city run down with blood to such a degree, that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood."⁴ Then the Roman eagles were glutted upon the carcases, and the fowls were gathered unto the supper of the great God, till "The army had no more people to slay or to plunder, *because there remained none to be the objects of their fury*; for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other such work to be done."⁵ No such vintage of blood had ever before been trodden from the winepress; no such supper of gory carcases had ever before regaled the fowls of heaven. It was "tribulation, — θλίψις, — βασανισμός, — such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."⁶

I have yet to show that our Lord came, *as he said*, to destroy these wicked men. And here I beg the reader of these Lectures to disabuse his mind of every previously formed opinion, and to come at once to the fountain-head, the Scriptures of truth. No matter what others may have said, or what may be the prevailing sentiments of the world, if this truth is essential, it

¹ Compare the parable: "A certain householder planted a vineyard, and digged a winepress," &c. . . . "When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? . . . he will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out," &c. — Matt. xxi. 33.

² "The Jews said 'When Hadrian besieged the city called, Bitter, he slew so many that the horses waded in blood up to their mouths.' " — Dr. Adam Clarke.

³ St. Jerome supposes this to be the length of the Holy Land.

⁴ Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8.

⁵ Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 1.

⁶ Matt. xxiv. 21.

will be clearly expressed ;—it will be expressed not merely once or twice, but continuously ;—and so expressed as to leave no doubt whatever on the mind. “To the law,” then, “and the testimony.” “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” If this doctrine be not one of the clearest and most decided in the New Testament, I pray that this book and all that it contains may perish. But if it is truth, and truth that cannot be gainsayed, then may the truth prevail ; may it triumph over prejudice and error ; may it fill our hearts with enlarged notions of our Lord’s glorious kingdom ; and may the fact of Christ *already come* influence our minds more powerfully than the hope of Christ about to come at some indefinite period—a period which visionaries have fixed a thousand times, and which has a thousand times deceived those who trusted them, a period which is now fixed between 1864 and 1885, and which when 1885 is passed, some other visionary will fix for another epoch still more distant, each generation failing to gather lessons of wisdom and prudence from the follies of those who have preceded them. So it will go on. 2000 years of patient waiting for the Church’s absent Head has not convinced mankind that their expectations may not be founded in fact. Generation after generation, already gone to their rest, to whom a literal coming of Christ to earth can be of no more consequence than the wind howling over their graves, has not decided the question that to them at any rate such a coming would be unproductive of any advantage. As the ancient Fathers always saw an Antichrist in their own day, and as the Chiliasts, whether of the times of Papias, Luther, or our own, always fancied a millenium close at hand, so men in every age have thought that a coming of Christ impended, which the Saviour most unequivocally declared should be restricted to a particular people, and confined within the limits of a particular generation. Strange to say, in matters of religion men will neither use common sense, nor abide by the conclusions of critical examination. Nay, they ever think that argument is an insult to faith, and that reason, the use of which they freely admit as applied to other things, is altogether out of place when brought to bear on Revelation. No, it must be faith, as it is called, or rather *prejudice*, strong as death, first assuming a position and then rearing a superstructure which, if the veil were removed,

• a child's breath would be sufficient to blow down. Oh, that we had faith to believe that there is no attempt at deception in the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God! Oh, that we had faith to believe that holy Scripture has a plain and definite meaning, not to be glossed over by special pleading, or to be perverted by sophistry! Oh, that we had faith to trust implicitly to its declarations respecting the time of Christ's second advent, believing that whatever darkness exists must be in us and not in God! Oh, that we had faith to see in the lasting dispersion of Israel an imperishable memorial of the coming of the Lord, chronicled for 2000 years in the history of mankind, testifying to men of every age and clime,—The Lord *has* come,—*has* effected the object for which he came,—*has* cast down the city, temple, and nation of his choice,—*has* erected a new and universal kingdom upon the ashes of Judaism, and *has* made his once favoured people the undying witnesses, from generation to generation, that "THE END" HAS ARRIVED, AND THAT "ALL THESE THINGS" HAVE BEEN LONG AGO FULFILLED.

And, first, I would observe, that it is not at all necessary to believe that his coming was a literal descent upon earth.

Not one word can be found in the Bible respecting such a coming. His coming is described as the "Manifestation," the "Appearing," the "Apocalypse" of Jesus Christ, "*παρουσία*," "*ἐπιφάνεια*," "*ἀποκάλυψις*." The sign of the Son of Man is said to "*appear in heaven*." His coming was to be momentary "*as the lightning*," shining from the "east unto the west," from the "one end of *heaven* unto the other." He is said to come "*in the clouds of heaven*." The saints who meet him are "caught up to meet the Lord *in the air*." Nay, he warned his disciples, that if told of a literal coming upon earth, they were not to believe it: "Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert¹, go not forth; Behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not; *for as the lightning* cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, *so shall*

¹ It is remarkable that Christ foretold not only the appearance of these false prophets, but the very places to which they would lead their deluded followers. These were the *desert* and the *secret chamber*. An Egyptian deceived 30,000 in the wilderness; and another impostor 6000 others in a gallery or secret chamber. — Bishop Porteus.

*also the coming of the Son of man be."*¹ "And he said unto the disciples, the days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man [*i. e.* to see him visibly upon earth as now], *and ye shall not see it*; and they shall say to you, See here; or See there [*i. e.* Behold he is in the desert, or in the secret chambers]: go not after them nor follow them; *for as the lightning* that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven shineth unto the other part under heaven, *so shall also the Son of man be in his day."*² Nothing can be more evident than that our Lord intended in these passages to check erroneous impressions respecting a literal coming to this earth, and to convey the idea that although false Christs and false prophets should announce such a coming, as we know from Josephus that they did, yet this his advent would be of a totally different kind.

Hence we find that advent described in terms which represent it as a heavenly Manifestation or Apocalypse.

"When Christ who is our life shall *appear* (φανερωθῇ)."—Col. iii. 4.

"When the chief Shepherd shall *appear* (φανερωθέντος)."—1 Peter, v. 4.

"When he shall *appear* (φανερωθῇ)."—1 John, ii. 28.

"The *appearing* (ἐπιφάνειας) of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall *shew* (δείξει)."—1 Tim. vi. 14, 15.

"His *appearing* (ἐπιφάνειαν) and his kingdom."—2 Tim. iv. 1.

"The *brightness* (ἐπιφανεία) of his *coming* (παρουσίας)."—2 Thess. ii. 8.

"The *glorious appearing* (ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης) of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—Titus, ii. 13.

"What shall be the sign of thy *coming* (παρουσίας) and of the end of the world?"—Matt. xxiv. 3.

¹ Matt. xxiv. 26, 27.

² Luke, xvii. 22 - 25.

"The *power and coming* (δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν)—i. e. the powerful—coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Peter, i. 16.

"We beseech you, brethren, by the *coming* (παρουσίας) of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. ii. 1.

"The *coming* (παρουσία) of the Lord draweth nigh."—James, v. 8.

"When he shall *appear* (φανερωθῇ) we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his *coming* (παρουσία)." —1 John, ii. 28.

"Rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed*" (ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, in the *Apocalypse of Jesus Christ*).—2 Thess. i. 7.

"Waiting for the *coming* (ἀποκαλύψω, *Apocalypse*) of our Lord Jesus Christ,"—1 Cor. i. 7.

"At the *appearing* (ἀποκαλύψει, *Apocalypse*) of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter, i. 7.

"At the *revelation* (ἀποκαλύψει, *Apocalypse*) of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter, i. 13.

"The *revelation* (Ἀποκαλύψις, *Apocalypse*) of Jesus Christ."—Rev. i. 1.

It will be seen that the terms in which this coming is described not only discountenance the notion of a literal coming to this earth, but serve to show that a Manifestation, an Apocalypse, was all that was intended.¹ Hence St. Paul calls it "*The brightness of his coming*" (ἐπιφάνεια τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ—*The manifestation of his presence*), "*The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour*." Hence he says that God shall "*shew*" this appearing, and that Christ shall

¹ This Apocalypse is called by Clement Ἐπισκόπη τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ. "The visitation of the kingdom of Christ." "La revue du Royaume de Jesus Christ." S. Clement ad Cor. i. 50. ; and in his second epistle, "Ἡμερα τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ Θεοῦ." S. Clement, Epist. ii. 12.

be seen (*ὁφθῆσεται*, *seen as in a vision*), by those that "love his appearing."¹

We may conceive that his appearing was like that vouchsafed to Stephen, who saw "*the heavens opened* and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God²;" or like the descent of the Holy Spirit at our Lord's baptism, when "*the heavens were opened unto him*, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him³;" or like the vision of Ezekiel, to whom "*the heavens were opened and who saw visions of God.*"⁴ Our Lord said it should be of this kind: "Verily, verily I say unto you, hereafter" (*ἀπ' ἀρτι*), *from just now* (used only of events soon to take place) "*ye shall see heaven open*, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."⁵ This can refer neither to his baptism nor to his transfiguration; his baptism was past, and at his transfiguration no angels of God ascended nor descended upon the Son of man.

This is confirmed by the vision of the Apocalypse in which St. John says, "*I saw heaven opened*, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True . . . and his name is called The Word of God."⁶

Or we may conceive his appearing to have been similar to his transfiguration upon Mount Tabor. St. Peter seems to say it would be of the same kind: "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (*i. e.* the manner in which he would come with power and great glory), but were eye-witnesses of his majesty, for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him on the holy mount."⁷

Here St. Peter evidently leads us to believe that the power

¹ It ought not to be overlooked that our translators have indiscriminately employed the words which are translated — Coming, Appearing, Revelation, thereby showing that they supposed they related only to one event, and that one of the words which is thus indiscriminately used by them — *παρουσία*, is the word used of the coming which was to take place ere that generation had passed away. Matt. xxiv. 3.

² Acts, vii. 56.

³ Matt. iii. 16.

⁴ Ezek. i. 1.

⁵ John, i. 51.

⁶ Rev. xix. 11—13.

⁷ 2 Peter, i. 16--18.

and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (*i. e.* his powerful coming, of which most probably the transfiguration was the type) would be of the same nature as the majesty of which those who were with him on the mount had already been eye-witnesses. St. Paul manifestly conveys the same idea when he says, "unto them that look for him shall he *appear* (*οφθησεται*, shall he appear as in a vision; the word is used of the glorious appearance of Moses and Elias at the transfiguration) the second time without sin unto salvation."¹

These scriptural descriptions of the mode and manner of his coming entirely do away with that notion, which has no deeper foundation than our own fancy, of a literal and personal coming to this earth. Indeed they seem to say that such a literal coming would be the very subject of the teaching of those false Christs and false prophets who should arise at that time. On the contrary, they declare with sufficient plainness that his coming would be a Manifestation, an Apparition, an Apocalypse, similar to the vision of Stephen, or to the glory of the transfiguration. That it would be instantaneous and momentary, like "the lightning shining from the east unto the west." That in that "moment" of time, that "twinkling of an eye," his saints would be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," his angels would "gather his elect from the one end of heaven to the other;" and that this would take place whilst his judgments fell upon guilty Jerusalem.

Shall we dare to say that it did not take place? Shall we presume to substitute our own views for the plain declarations of the revealed Word of God? The writers of those days have left us the wonderful history, that such heavenly apparitions did occur at that time. Is it for us to say, that the armies in heaven did not follow him, when Josephus says, "that chariots and troops of soldiers in their armour were seen running about among the clouds and surrounding of cities?"² Shall we dare to say that his coming was not as the lightning, when a heathen historian records the fact, that "*the temple shone with sudden flashes of fire out of the clouds?*"³ Do we so clearly understand the mystery of the

¹ Heb. ix. 28.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

³ Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. 13.

resurrection spoken of by St. Paul, "Behold, I shew you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,*"¹ that we can afford to despise the awful statement of Josephus?—"The priests who were going by night into the inner court of the temple said, that in the first place they felt a quaking and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, Let us depart hence."²

The men who journeyed with Saul to Damascus, when the persecutor was struck down to the earth by that "light above the brightness of the sun," "saw the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake." "They stood speechless, hearing a voice," φωνῆς, or sound, "but seeing no man." Not so with Saul; he "heard a voice *speaking unto him*, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"³ When the answer came to the Saviour's prayer, "Father, glorify thy name," "the people therefore that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him."⁴ Elisha's servant, till his eyes were opened, saw not the "mountain full of horses of fire and chariots of fire round about Elisha."⁵

So with this Jewish and heathen description of the prodigies of those days; enough was revealed to make men sensible of the presence of great and awful mysteries,—to the servants of Christ those mysteries revealed the coming of the Lord Jesus.

1. *I shall endeavour to show first from the prophecies of the Old Testament that his coming was expected at that time.* St. Peter warrants us to expect that this advent would be foretold by the prophets. "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things⁶, *which God hath*

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

² Acts, ix. 7. ; xxii. 13.

³ 2 Kings, vi. 17.

² Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5.

⁴ John, xii. 28, 29.

⁶ It is here said that the heavens must receive Christ "*until the times of restitution of all things,*" — ἀχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων, and that "when the times of refreshing should come from the presence of the Lord, *he shall send Jesus Christ* which before was preached unto you." These "times of restitution of all things" are doubtless identical with "*the time of reformation,*" καιροῦ διορθώσεως, of Heb. ix. 10. Now the law was to continue until "*the time of reformation.*" The inference is that the period of Christ's coming would be the abrogation of the Jewish law. That "the

*spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. . . . Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."*¹

And here, although "the prophets from Samuel" foretold of these days, I hesitate to adduce their predictions, because it may be objected that the first desolation of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar may be the "day of the Lord" alluded to, just as I could not with any confidence employ any prophecy delivered before the return from the captivity to establish the unscriptural notion of the return of the Jews to their own land. This objection, however, cannot reach the prophecies delivered *after* that event. I invite attention to a few of the plainest of these.

Let us first take the prophecy of Daniel, vii. 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him : and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The time of this coming of the Son of man with the clouds of heaven is accurately defined in this prophecy. It is the time of the fourth great universal kingdom upon earth—the iron kingdom of Rome. The three preceding beasts of this vision are gene-

times of the restitution of all things" cannot relate to any time in the distant future, is evident from the circumstance that "Elias was to come first *and restore all things*;" and that our Saviour says, "Elias is come *already*."—Matt. xvii. 11, 12.

It is worthy of notice that under the law the High Priest went alone once every year into the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all, not without blood which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people; he then came out (and till he came forth out of the Holy of Holies the atonement was not considered to have been made), having made the atonement, with a blessing for the people. So Christ, our Great High Priest, "which is passed into the heavens," entered in once "by his own blood" "into the holy place;" and at the period of the restitution of all things, came out of the Holy of Holies, "having obtained eternal redemption for us." "Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; . . . and unto them that look for him shall he appear (*ὀφθῆναι*) the second time without sin — (a sin-offering) — unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 28.

¹ Acts, iii. 21—24.

rally allowed to be the kingdoms of Babylonia, Persia, Media, and Greece. One only universal kingdom remains—the great Roman kingdom. If the three first kingdoms were *heathen* kingdoms, the fourth must be a heathen kingdom also, or else the whole force of the antithesis would be lost which represents this fourth heathen kingdom succeeded by the last universal kingdom—the kingdom of Christ. In the days of that fourth kingdom, which “was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, . . . which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet,” “*the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High.*”¹

Let us next consider the prophecy contained in Zechariah xiv.: “Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And *his feet shall stand at that day upon the mount of Olives*, which is before Jerusalem on the east², and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah: and *the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*”

Now what is the time with which this prophecy is concerned? It is concerned with the spoil and capture of Jerusalem by the heathen. “I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and *the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished.*” It is the time of the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. “It shall be in that day that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem: . . . in summer

¹ Dan. vii. 26, 27.

² Compare Rev. vii. 2.

and winter shall it be, and the Lord shall be king over all the earth." This time, so clearly defined, is the time of his awful coming. "*And his feet shall stand at that day upon the mount of Olives,*"¹ (which, like the holy city in Rev. xvi. 19., is said to be divided into three parts, meaning rendered utterly desolate by the invasion of the Romans), "*and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*"

The last of the Old Testament prophets has also clearly marked out the time of our Lord's second coming. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. . . . but who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand *when* he appeareth? . . . For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . . *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.*"²

Now, when was this day to come? *It was to follow the coming of Elijah the prophet*,—the Elijah marked out by our blessed Lord as John the Baptist: "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." The Elijah who warned his countrymen of the coming of that day: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (*τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς*), *the wrath soon about to come*. The Elijah who foretold that day would come *after the Pentecost*: "He shall baptize you *with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor" (*τὴν ἀλωνα αὐτοῦ*)—the Jewish people—"and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."³ If we do not take this plain and obvious view of the passage, we shall be driven to the necessity of believing that Elijah has yet to come in person, although our Lord has said that Elijah has come *already*; or else that a "represented Elijah who is to

¹ Theodoret on Zech. xiv. 4. explains his standing on Mount Olivet, of his standing there at his coming to avenge himself on Jerusalem. It is not a little remarkable that the ascension took place on Olivet, for "they returned unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet;" and that angels assured them that "this same Jesus which is taken up from you unto heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 11.

² Mal. iii. 1.; iv. 1. 5.

³ Matt. iii. 12.

restore everything through such means as fall within an Elijah's work," is somewhat fancifully intended. Observe it well, then, that the day of the Lord was to be immediately preceded by the coming of John the Baptist, and that no such day has succeeded those times but the day of the final desolation of the Jewish people.

2. *But, leaving the argument from prophecy, I get at once to the proof, from the New Testament, that this appearing of the Lord Jesus took place at that time.*

In three of the gospels, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, the disciples ask our Lord respecting the *time* of his coming. As he was sitting on the mount of Olives, over against the temple, the destruction of which he had just foretold, they put to him a plain and definite question respecting the *time* when he would come to destroy the temple and to close the age.

"As he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us *when* shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world," (Matt. xxiv. 3.)—the consummation of the æon or age.¹

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him privately, Tell us *when* shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"—Mark, xiii. 4.

"Master, but *when* shall these things be, and what sign

¹ "Συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος." "The context here makes it quite impossible that the end of the world generally can be meant, unless we suppose it was to end with that generation, which is absurd. *Συντελεία*, therefore, in this place, must mean consummation rather than end."—Professor Lee, p. 282.

The same expression is used (Heb. ix. 26.): "*Now once in the end of the world, ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων,*" hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." If the end of the world generally is meant, Christ will not suffer for sinners until the final judgment. So Matt. xiii. 39.: "The harvest is the end of the world," *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος*. This is further defined as "the end of *this* world," *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*; where the demonstrative pronoun *τούτου* makes it certain that the end of that dispensation was intended.

will there be when these things shall come to pass?"—Luke, xxi. 7.

Here the whole question is a question of time. "Master, WHEN?" A question plainly relating not to a variety of subjects, but to one definite subject; not to events separated by great intervals, but to one distinct event, and that, the time when the destruction of the temple should take place which had been just foretold. And, indeed, from the circumstance that the same question is put three times to our Lord, as recorded by the three evangelists, *and put each time in a different form*, whilst the answer given in each case is substantially the same, it is made matter of moral certainty that the question cannot be divided into three or more separate inquiries, but that it refers to one definite and specific object.

"Master, WHEN?" Not, when shall the millenium take place? of which the disciples then had not heard a word. Not, when shall the so-called end of the world arrive? for they believed that "the end of the world" was the close of the then existing economy. But WHEN shall these things be of which thou hast spoken? What shall be the sign of thy coming to destroy the city and temple, and to close the age?

To this question our Lord replied without equivocation and without disguise, without mixing up two sets of homogeneous predictions, and without saying that part of his words should receive a present, and part a future accomplishment. To a straightforward question he gave a straightforward answer. He said indeed that the precise day and hour was not known to the angels nor to himself, but that THE END should come, and his appearing should take place, before THAT GENERATION HAD PASSED AWAY. And that this was the idea which he intended to convey, is made certain not only from the evident meaning of the words themselves, but from the well-known fact, that they who heard them attached no other sense to the predictions.

"Master, WHEN?" Did our Lord determine that "WHEN?" "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and THEN" (τότε) "shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and THEN" (τότε) "shall all the tribes of the earth" (τῆς γῆς), Judæa, "mourn; and they shall see the

Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”—Matt. xxiv. 29.

That coming, according to St. Matthew, was to take place “*Immediately after the tribulation of those days.*”

St. Mark is still more explicit with regard to the time.

“*But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, . . . and THEN*” (τότε) “*shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.*” There is no avoiding the statement, that the Jews were to see the Son of man coming “*In those days, after that tribulation.*”—Mark, xiii. 24.

St. Luke points out the *time* with still greater distinctness.

“*These be the days of vengeance . . . but woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days . . . they shall fall by the edge of the sword . . . and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled . . . and there shall be signs in the sun . . . and THEN*” (τότε) “*shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*”

This would be quite sufficient to show, that as the whole question was a question of time, so our Lord answered it by pointing out the time of his coming as the time of Jerusalem's downfall. But he confirmed these assertions in a manner that

¹ “Bishop Newton resolves all these declarations of our Lord's coming with power and great glory, into the statement, that the destruction of Jerusalem would be such a remarkable instance of Divine vengeance, that many would be led to acknowledge Christ and the Christian religion.”—Diss. on the Prop. p. 51.

“This prophecy is conceived in such high and swelling terms, that not only the modern interpreters, but the ancient likewise, have supposed that our Lord interweaves into it a direct prediction of his coming again to judgment . . . To which the defenders of religion (query *irreligion*?) have opposed this answer, that the distinction of short and long, in the duration of time, is lost in eternity, and with the Almighty ‘a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years.’”—Warburton's Julian, book i.

leaves no room for doubt. He appealed to the common course of nature as a proof that his words would receive an immediate fulfilment. In each of the three Gospels he records the parable of the fig-tree.

“Now learn a parable of the fig-tree ; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh : so likewise ye, when *ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*”—Matt. xxiv. 32, 33.

“Now learn a parable of the fig-tree ; when her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near : so ye in like manner, when *ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.*”—Mark, xiii. 28, 29.

“Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees ; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, *when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*”—Luke, xxi. 29—31.

And then he added the clinching and convincing words,—

“Verily I say unto you, **THIS GENERATION** shall not pass till *all these things* be fulfilled.”—Matt. xxiv. 34.

“Verily I say unto you, that **THIS GENERATION** shall not pass till *all these things* be done.”—Mark, xiii. 30.

“Verily I say unto you, that **THIS GENERATION** shall not pass away till *all* be fulfilled.”—Luke, xxi. 32.

Remember what “**ALL THESE THINGS**” include : “Nation rising against nation,”—persecution of the Christian Church—Jerusalem compassed with armies—Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles—signs in the sun, and moon, and stars—the coming of the Son of man—the sending forth of the angels—and the gathering of his elect ; and if you can, *and if you dare*, separate into distinct periods what Christ said should be

SEEN BY THE MEN OF THAT GENERATION¹, put your own interpretation upon the plain words of Christ, and put off that coming which he said should *then* take place, to some indefinite period treasured up in the fancy chambers of your own imagination.

3. This, all powerful as it is, does not stand alone. I refer you next to the passages immediately preceding the transfiguration recorded by the three evangelists, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, as additional proof that our Lord would come in the lifetime of the then existing generation. That the passages in question do not refer, as some have supposed, to the glory of the transfiguration, is evident from the circumstance that in all three Gospels allusion is made to Christ's coming in the glory of his Father, "*with the holy angels*;" and St. Matthew adds, to "reward every man according to his works," *which he did not do at his transfiguration*.

"For the Son of man shall come (μέλλει ἔρχεσθαι, *shall soon come*) in the glory of his Father *with his angels*, and then he shall reward every man according to his works; verily I say unto you, there be some standing here *which shall not taste of*

¹ "This generation shall not pass away." I know of no passage in the New Testament in which the word "γενεά," "generation," is not used in the common acceptance of the term, "Generatio hominum simul viventium." — Schleusner.

"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matt. xii. 39.); "The men of Nineveh shall rise up against this generation, and shall condemn it" (Luke, xi. 32.); "Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation" (Luke, vii. 31.); "As Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation" (Luke, xi. 30.); "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts, ii. 40.); "All the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations" (Matt. i. 17.).

Why should the word "γενεά" be twisted into a sense nowhere else given to it in the Scriptures, and made to signify the present existence of the Jewish people? or how is it possible to avoid the force of the demonstrative pronoun, "THIS generation?" Not only is the liberty thus taken with the Word of God, sufficient, if it might be taken in other cases, to overthrow every doctrine of Christianity, but the argument (if argument it can be called) which supposes "THIS GENERATION" to mean the present existence of the Jewish people, is one of which the veriest tyro ought to be thoroughly ashamed. Such special pleading argues a bad cause. The Word of God does not stand in need of such patching; and if it did, we should do right, as reasonable beings, in rejecting it altogether.

death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.”—Matt. xvi. 27, 28.

“Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father *with the holy angels*. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here *which shall not taste of death* till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”—Mark, viii. 38. ix. 1.

“Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, *and of the holy angels*; but I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here *which shall not taste of death* till they see the kingdom of God.”—Luke, ix. 26, 27.

Two of those who stood there did “taste of death” before they saw “the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” James the brother of John was slain with the sword, before the Church had welcomed back her absent Head. Peter, according to our Lord’s prediction, was made to “stretch forth his hands” upon the cross, whilst “another girded him, and carried him whither he would not.” But the promise of this glorious coming was not forgotten;—with his dying breath he bequeaths the assurance of its speedy advent to the Church:—“I think it meet,” he says, “as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance . . . for we have not followed cunningly devised fables *when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” He knew that he should die before Christ came;—he knew that he must “shortly put off his tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ had showed him,” and his anxiety was, that “after his decease they might have these things always in remembrance.”⁴ *It was not so, however, with another of those who stood there.* After our Lord had shown Peter “by what death he should glorify God,” “Peter seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, and

¹ 2 Peter, i. 13. 16.

saith unto Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?*" "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true."¹ This is the disciple which saw "heaven opened," and "one like unto the Son of Man," reaping the harvest of the earth. This is the disciple who could say, "Even so, amen." "*Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus.*"²

4. The next proof to which I invite your attention is the answer given by our Lord to the solemn question put to him by the high priest immediately before his execution; and this comes to us with all the greater force, inasmuch as it bears the character of the dying testimony of the Lord Jesus.

The question, as given by the evangelists, is as follows:—

"I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God."³

"Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"⁴

"Art thou the Christ? tell us."⁵

What reply did our Lord make to these questions?

"Jesus saith unto him, thou hast said [equivalent to, I am]; nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter—*ἀπ' ἄρτι*,⁶ *from almost immediately*—shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."⁷

"And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of Man

¹ John, xxi. 24.

² Rev. xxii. 20.

³ Matt. xxvi. 63.

⁴ Mark, xiii. 61.

⁵ Luke, xxii. 67.

⁶ "'Απ' ἄρτι;" i. q. 'Απὸ τοῦ νῦν: *used only of events soon about to happen.*

"'Απ' ἄρτι ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν," κ. τ. λ.—Matt. xxvi. 64.

"Οὐ μὴ πῶς ἀπ' ἄρτι ἐκ τούτου τοῦ γεννήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου."—Matt. xxvi. 29.

"'Απ' ἄρτι ὄψεσθε τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεφύγοντα."—John, i. 52.

"'Απ' ἄρτι λέγω ὑμῖν πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι."—John, xiii. 19.

"'Απ' ἄρτι γινώσκετε αὐτὸν."—John, xiv. 7.

⁷ Matt. xxvi. 64.

sitting on the right hand of power *and coming in the clouds of heaven.*"¹

"Hereafter—ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν², *from the now*—shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God."³

Observe it well, then, that in answer to the most solemn question which the Jews ever put to our Lord,—a question touching his Messiahship,—he publicly gave out, as the proof of that Messiahship, that *from almost immediately, ἀπ' ἀπρι* (and the words are never used *except of events soon to take place*) or, according to St. Luke, *from the now*—ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν (an expression only found in five other places in the New Testament, *and always referring to things directly about to happen*), they of that day and generation should SEE the "Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, AND COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." And that they to whom these words were addressed understood them in the sense of an assertion of Divine power, and of an immediate coming to judgment, is evident from the manner in which they received them.

"Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy."⁴

"Ye have heard the blasphemy."⁵

"What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth."⁶

Is it a wonder that our Lord should elsewhere have abundantly confirmed these statements respecting his immediate coming, and that he should have defined that time by unmis-

¹ Mark, xiv. 62.

² "Ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν," *from the now*,—found only five times in the New Testament, *and employed only of events soon about to take place.*

"Ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη πορεύσομαι."—Acts, xviii. 6.

"Ἔσονται γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν πάντες ἐν οἴκῳ ἐνὶ διαμεμερισμένοι."—Luke, xii. 52.

"Ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔσθ' ζωγρῶν."—Luke, v. 10.

"Ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μακαριοῦσί με πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί."—Luke, i. 48.

"Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα."—2 Cor. v. 16.

³ Luke, xxii. 69.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 65.

⁵ Mark, xiv. 64.

⁶ Luke, xxii. 71.

takable and impassable limits? That he should have said to his disciples, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come."¹ That he should have said that one of his disciples should be quick upon earth at the time of his coming. "*If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee.*"² That he should have elsewhere repeated this statement, as recorded by the three evangelists,— "There be some standing here *which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.*"³ That he should have represented his absence *as temporary, and but for "a little while."* "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come (ἐρχομαι, *I am coming*) to you. Yet a little while (ἐν μικρῷ), and the world seeth me no more . . . at that day ye shall know," &c.⁴ "*A little while* (μικρὸν), and ye shall not see me (θεωρεῖτε), and again a little while (μικρὸν) and ye shall see me⁵ (ὄψεσθε), *because I go to the Father.*"⁶ "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again (πάλιν ἐρχομαι, *I am coming again*) and receive you unto myself."⁷

That in innumerable passages he should have declared *that his coming should be seen by those whom he addressed.*

"Shall ye see the Son of Man."⁸

"Ye shall see the Son of Man."⁹

¹ Matt. x. 23. — Then his coming must have taken place *before* the cities of Israel perished; and where have these been for the last 2000 years? These cities are moreover defined by the context *as cities then existing*,—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. x. 5, 6.

² John, xxi. 22, 23.

³ Matt. xvi. 28.; Mark, ix. 1.; Luke, ix. 27.

⁴ John, xiv. 18—20.

⁵ It is worthy of notice, that the verb used to designate the human appearance of Christ upon earth is θεωρεῖτε, whereas the verb used to describe his second coming is ὄψεσθε, — "ye shall see as in a vision." — Compare Heb. ix. 28., John, i. 52., 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

⁶ John, xvi. 16. — That "little while" could not refer to the period of forty days between his death and his ascension, for it is added: "*Because I go to the Father.*" During that interval *he had not gone to the Father*: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father." — John, xx. 17.

⁷ John, xiv. 2—3.

⁸ Matt. xxvi. 64.

⁹ Mark, xiv. 62.

"When *ye* see these things come to pass."¹

"Watch *ye*, therefore, and pray always that *ye* may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass—*τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι*, *that shall soon come to pass—and to stand before the Son of Man.*"²

So, also, in all those texts which relate to the institution of the Christian passover, there is a manifest allusion to the speediness of his coming.

"I say unto you I will not drink henceforth—*ἀπ' ἄρτι*, *from just now*—of this fruit of the vine *until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*"³ "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, *until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*"⁴ "For I say unto you I will not any more eat thereof *until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*"⁵ "For I say unto you I will not drink of the fruit of the vine *until the kingdom of God shall come.*"⁶ But St. Paul says, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *till he come.*"⁷ And the time of his coming is the time also of the kingdom. "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye *that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*"⁸

The unavoidable inference is, that the coming, the kingdom, and the gathering together of those who should drink it new with him in his kingdom, are synchronical, and that coming is declared to be, *ἀπ' ἄρτι*, *from just now*, and within the lifetime of the existing generation.⁹

¹ Luke, xxi. 31.

³ Matt. xxvi. 29.

⁶ Luke, xxii. 16.

⁷ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

² Luke, xxi. 36.

⁴ Mark, xiv. 25.

⁵ Luke, xxii. 18.

⁸ Luke, xxi. 31.

⁹ The consideration that the passover was "fulfilled in the kingdom of God," need not in any way detract from our observance of the Christian sacrament. The first passover was fulfilled in Egypt; the lamb slain and the blood sprinkled were the tokens of safety to the Israelites in their house of bondage. But that "night of the Lord was to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."—Exod. xii. 42. So "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," and that passover was "fulfilled in the kingdom of God;" but this is no reason why the universal church in every age should not profess a grateful recollection of that stupendous mystery.

5. *But I pass on to show you that our Lord's coming was connected with the destruction of a particular city and people, and that the two events are inseparably united in the word of God.*

In the parable of the wicked husbandmen he connects his coming with the destruction of the Jewish people.

"When, therefore, the Lord of the vineyard *cometh*, what will he do unto these husbandmen? They say unto him, *He will miserably destroy those wicked men.*"¹

"What shall, therefore, the lord of the vineyard do? *He will come and destroy the husbandmen*, and will give the vineyard unto others."²

"What, therefore, shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? *He shall come and destroy these husbandmen*, and shall give the vineyard to others."³

There is no evading the great truth here unfolded, that our Lord connects his coming with the time of the judgments upon the Jewish people; for not only is he represented as giving the vineyard unto others, but at the close of each of the three parables, it is added, "they perceived that he had spoken the parable *against them.*"

In Luke, xvii. 20—37., we have a most clear and decided statement *that the time when the Son of Man should be revealed* should be the time when Jerusalem should be compassed with armies, when the Christians should escape from the doomed city, when one should be taken and another left, and when the Roman eagles should be gathered together to fatten on the slain.

Our Lord is demanded of the Pharisees "*when the Kingdom of God should come*" [*i. e.* when he should come in his kingdom; compare Luke, xxi. 31.]; and his answer was that the kingdom of God should not be a *visible* kingdom upon earth. "The kingdom of God *cometh* not with observation, neither shall they say Lo here, or Lo there, for the kingdom of God is

¹ Matt. xxi. 40.

² Mark, xii. 9.

³ Luke, xx. 15.

within you." And this he subsequently explained to his disciples to mean, that a time was coming when they should no more see him on earth as they did then; "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it," and that when "false Christs and false prophets should say, See here or See there," "Behold he is in the desert," "Behold he is in the secret chambers," Behold Christ has once more come personally upon earth; they were not to "go after them or follow them," *for his coming would be a sudden and heavenly apparition, a momentary and glorious Apocalypse.* "For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, SO SHALL ALSO THE SON OF MAN BE IN HIS DAY."

And then he pointed out the *time* of this awful coming. He said indeed that "*first* he must suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation." *But that after that*—evil days should come on like the days of Noah and the days of Lot when the flood came on the world of the ungodly, and the fire and brimstone from heaven destroyed them all. "EVEN THUS SHALL IT BE IN THE DAY WHEN THE SON OF MAN IS REVEALED."

"In that day" the Jew who was "upon the house-top and his stuff in the house" (evidently referring to eastern modes of life) was not to come down to take it away. He who was in the field, outside the doomed city, was not to turn back. Of the women grinding at the mill (a custom purely Jewish) one was to be taken, and the other left. And all this was to happen whilst the Roman armies were gathered around Jerusalem, and the Roman eagles preying upon the carcase of the Jewish nation. "And they answered and said unto him, Where Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will be eagles gathered together."

So again in that parable in which he checked the false impression prevalent at that time respecting the immediate development of his heavenly kingdom, *the period of his coming is connected with the punishment of the Jewish people.* We are told, "He added and spake a parable because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." The parable represents "a certain nobleman" [an allusion to the custom of provincial

deputies going to Rome to be confirmed in their government], "who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." Before, however, he undertakes this journey, he calls his servants, and bids them "*Occupy till I come.*" "But his citizens (the Jews) hated him, and sent a message after him saying, *we will not have this man to reign over us.*"

"And it came to pass *when he was returned, having received the kingdom*" [showing that the kingdom was not fully developed until his return], he punishes those disobedient citizens who rejected him as their Messiah. "But those mine enemies, *which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.*"¹ Here the coming, the kingdom, and the punishment of the disobedient Jews are synchronical.

So, in Luke xviii., our Lord declared not only that he would come speedily for the purpose of vengeance upon the disobedient Jews, *but that his coming would be local, and restricted to a particular land.*

The passage occurs at the close of the parable of the unjust judge. "And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect? . . . I tell you that he will avenge them *speedily* (*ἐν τάχει*). *Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth*" (*ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*)—Judæa?

Now, by comparing this with the parallel passage² it will be seen that "*the earth*" can only mean the land of Judæa:—

"Shall not God avenge (*ποιήσει ἐκδίκησιν*) his own elect?"³

"These be the days of vengeance (*ἐκδικήσεως*)."⁴

"When the Son of Man cometh."⁵

"Then shall they see the Son of Man coming."⁶

"Shall he find faith on the earth (*ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*) Judæa."⁷

"There shall be great distress in the land (*ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*) Judæa—and wrath upon *this people*"—the Jews,—where the

¹ Luke, x. 11—27.

² Luke, xviii. 7.

³ Luke, xviii. 8.

⁷ Luke, xviii. 8

² Luke xxi. 22, 23.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 22.

⁶ Luke, xxi. 27.

qualifying clause "*this people*" makes it certain that the land of Judæa must be intended.

There is no evading the conclusion that his coming was for the purpose of executing vengeance upon the disobedient Jews, and that it was a coming "*to the earth*"—Judæa.

But why multiply proofs? Stephen was put to death for saying "Jesus of Nazareth *shall destroy this place*, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."¹ James the Just was martyred for his glorious testimony to the speedy coming of Christ. "Why do ye ask me respecting Jesus the Son of Man? he is now sitting in the heavens on the right hand of great power and is coming — (μέλλει ἔρχεσθαι) *is soon about to come*—in the clouds of heaven."² Clement, who wrote his first Epistle before the destruction of Jerusalem,³ said that his coming should take place *before the destruction of the temple*, and that it would be accompanied by a resurrection of his saints.

"Of a truth, *quickly and suddenly* shall his will be accomplished: for he shall come quickly and shall not delay, *and suddenly the Lord shall come to his temple*, and the Holy one whom ye expect. Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord shows explicitly to us *the resurrection which is soon to take place*, of which he made the Lord Jesus the first fruits, raising him from the dead."⁴

With every stone hurled by the engines of the tenth legion against the walls of Jerusalem the watchmen on the towers gave notice of the stone when it was let go, and cried out in their own country language, "THE SON COMETH."⁵ Euse-

¹ Acts, vi. 14.

² Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

³ Clement, mentioned as the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, whose name is "in the Book of Life," Phil. iv. 3., speaks of the apostles as living in his day. Δάβωμεν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἡμῶν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀποστόλους. "Ελθωμεν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔγγιστα γενομένους ἀθλητάς. Δάβωμεν τῆς γένεας ἡμῶν τὰ γενναῖα ὑποδείγματα.—St. Clement, Epist. i.

Jerusalem is also spoken of as still existing, and the temple service still continued. Οὐ πανταχοῦ ἀδελφοὶ προσφέρονται θυσίαι ἐνδελειχισμοῦ, ἢ εὐχῶν, ἢ περὶ ἀμαρτίας καὶ πλημμελίας, ἀλλ' ἢ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ μόνῃ . . . ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ ναοῦ πρὸς τὸ θυσιαστήριον μωμοσκοπηθὲν τὸ προσφερόμενον διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ τῶν προειρημένων λειτουργῶν.—St. Clement, Epist. i. 40.

⁴ 1 Epist. ad Cor. xxiv.

⁵ Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 6.

bios records the fact that the Jewish people *at that time* expected that Jesus would come as their Messiah. He tells us of the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem that, "As there were many of the rulers that believed . . . *there was danger that the people would now expect Jesus as the Messiah.*" And he adds that immediately upon the martyrdom of James, who, as Hegesippus says, "became a faithful witness both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus is Christ," the temple and the city fell.

"The wiser part of the Jews were of opinion that this was the cause of the immediate siege of Jerusalem, which happened to them for no other cause than the crime against him." "These things," says Josephus, "happened to the Jews to avenge James the Just, who was the brother of him that is called Christ."¹

6. St. Paul accurately points out the time of our Lord's coming, as that when some enemy *then* hindering the church should be removed.

"That day shall not come except there be a [THE] falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition . . . and now *ye know* what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time, for the mystery of iniquity *doth already work*, only he *who now letteth*, will let, until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming."² Here it is evident that St. Paul intended to designate some enemy whose schemes were *then* in operation, and who *then* opposed the prosperity of the church. This enemy (then existing) was to be destroyed "*with the brightness of his coming.*" This at once determines the immediate character of the advent, or else we must be driven to the conclusion that the enemy existing in St. Paul's day, an enemy well known to those to whom the Apostle wrote, "*Ye know* what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time," is still existing in the Thessalonian Church, and has yet to be destroyed.

Added to this the Apostle connects the coming of the Lord

¹ Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

² 2 Thess. ii. 3—8.

with the punishment of the Jewish people. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God *to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you*, and to you who are troubled rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels*, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." (2 Thess. i. 6—10.)

"*The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*; for when *they*—the Jews—shall say, Peace and safety, then *sudden destruction cometh upon them* as travail upon a woman with child, and *they* shall not escape."¹

"God hath not appointed *us* [the Christians of those days] to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we might live together with him."²

This is no new idea set forth by the Apostle; it is only a repetition of his Master's words: "When, therefore, the Lord of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto these husbandmen? They say unto him *he will miserably destroy those wicked men*, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen."

7. That this immediate coming of the Lord Jesus was the settled belief and the subject of the continual teaching of the Apostles, is proved abundantly by expressions everywhere scattered throughout the Epistles, showing that they expected an advent close at hand.³

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation *nearer* (ἐγγύ-

¹ 1 Thess. v. 2.

² 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.

³ "Absentia vero illius patris-familias *tempus est quod in adventum ejus restat.*"

This is elsewhere called:

"Post aliquantum vero temporis,
Post dies deinde non multos."—

Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 5.

τερον) than when we believed; *the night is far spent; the day is at hand* (ἤγγικεν)."¹

"But this I say, brethren, *the time is short*," (ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν, *the time is contracted as to what is left*;) "it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away."²

"To wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." (τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης, *who shall deliver us from the wrath, the coming one*.)³

"I give thee charge . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot unrebukable *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*."⁴

"Yet a little while, ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, and he that shall come will come, and *will not tarry* (οὐ χρονιέῃ)."⁵

"So much the more as ye SEE the day approaching, (ἐγγιζουσιν τὴν ἡμέραν)."⁶

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, *unto the coming* (παρουσίας) *of our Lord*."⁷

"Be ye also patient . . . for the coming (παρουσία) of the Lord draweth nigh (ἤγγικε)."⁸

¹ Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

² 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

³ 1 Thess. i. 10.

⁴ 2 Tim. vi. 14.—If it could not be said that St. Paul meant Timothy to keep this charge only until the fall of Jerusalem, could it be said with greater propriety that he was to keep it until the so-called end of the world? or, is it not possible that St. Paul might have believed that Timothy would be among those who "should not *all* sleep," but who "should be *alive and remain* unto the coming of the Lord?"

⁵ Heb. x. 37.

⁶ Heb. x. 25.

⁷ James, v. 7.

⁸ James, v. 8.

“Behold the Judge *standeth before the door.*”¹

“Hope to the end (τελείως) [compare “*Then shall the end come*”²] for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the revelation* (ἀποκαλύψει) *of Jesus Christ.*”³

“*The end of all things is at hand* (ἤγγικε).”⁴

“Who shall give account to him *that is ready* (τῷ ἐτοίμῳ ἔχοντι) *to judge the quick and the dead.*”⁵

“*The time is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at *us*, what shall the end be of them that obey not,” &c.⁶

“The day of the Lord will come *as a thief in the night.*”⁷

“*The Lord is not slack* (οὐ βραδύνει), *delays not* — concerning his promise.”⁸

“*The Lord is at hand* (ὁ Κύριος ἐγγυς).”⁹

“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema *Maranatha*,” let him be accursed at the coming of the Lord.¹⁰

“*We which are alive and remain* (οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι) *unto the coming of the Lord.*”¹¹

“Then *we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air.”¹²

“We shall not *all* sleep.”¹³

“Little children, *it is the last time*; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come; even *now are there many anti-christs*, whereby we know *that it is the last time.*”¹⁴

Nothing can be more evident than that our Lord's disciples

¹ James, v. 9.

² 1 Peter, i. 13.

³ 1 Peter, iv. 5.

⁷ 2 Peter, iii. 10.

⁹ Phil. iv. 5.

¹¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15.

¹³ 1 Cor. xv. 51.

² Matt. xxiv. 14.

⁴ 1 Peter, iv. 7.

⁶ 1 Peter, iv. 17.

⁸ 2 Peter, iii. 9.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

¹² 1 Thess. iv. 17.

¹⁴ 1 John, ii. 18.

implicitly believed the declarations which he had made to them respecting his advent during the lifetime of the then existing generation. Nothing can be more evident than that they held and taught the doctrine of Christ's coming close at hand. They never dreamed of thousands of years intervening between his first and his second coming. They never dreamed that this coming, like the sword of Damocles, was to be continually suspended over the church. They never mixed up two homogeneous sets of predictions flowing together in artless parallel. They never spoke of it in connection with the return of the Jews to their own land, or with any of the wild phantasies of the present age. They never associated it with the idea of a millennium, or a personal reign of Christ on earth. On the contrary, they believed and taught that this coming would take place ere the term of their natural life had expired; they connected it with the destruction of the Jewish people, as their Lord had said. They anticipated with joyful expectation the time of their being gathered together into the barns of eternal rest, and from day to day were "looking for that blessed hope, *and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*"¹

And as the night became "FAR SPENT," and their salvation appeared "NEARER" than when they first believed, and as by the unmistakable tokens preceding that mighty advent they "SAW" "the day approaching;" then still more distinctly and decidedly did they speak of the immediate character of this second coming. The veil seemed rent away—the mists withdrawn. "That day and that hour of which no man knew, no, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son," is now proclaimed to be near at hand. God gives to his Son the knowledge of his speedy Apocalypse, and "the Revelation, *Ἀποκάλυψις*, of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto him*, to show unto his servants *things which must shortly be done*," is "sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John."

Then poured forth the full blaze of light conveying to the churches the announcement that "THE TIME IS AT HAND."²

Then the prophecy was to be left UNSEALED because of its immediate accomplishment. Then he was pronounced BLESSED who kept the sayings of these impending judgments. Then

¹ Titus, ii. 13.

² Rev. i. 3.

he that was unjust and filthy and he that was righteous and holy, was to be taken or left, WITHOUT PLACE OR TIME FOR FURTHER CHANGE; and the first blast of the trump of God sent forth its note of deep and solemn warning, "THE LORD IS AT HAND."

"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye¹ shall see him, and they also which pierced him."²

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me."³

"Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this Book."⁴

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth."⁵

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."⁶

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly."⁷

"Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus."⁸

Then was unequivocally manifested the nature and the object of his coming, when the beloved Apostle to whom alone the promise was made, "If I will that he tarry till I come," beholds "A white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the SON OF MAN . . . in his hand a sharp sickle⁹; . . . and he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth (Judæa), and the earth was reaped."

Then was revealed unanswerably the connection between his coming and the wrath upon disobedient Israel. When "The angel gathered the vine of the earth [Judæa], and cast it into

¹ This is explained by the subsequent parallel clause, "All the kindreds of the earth," *πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς*, the tribes of Palestine, "shall wail because of him." "Then shall all the tribes of the earth — Judæa — mourn."—Matt. xxiv. 30. Compare "Διὰ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα συνεληλύθασι πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἔθνῶν,"—Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23., where the tribes, *φυλαὶ*, are put into apposition with the Gentiles, *ἔθνη*.

² Rev. i. 7.

³ Rev. xxii. 12.

⁴ Rev. xxii. 7.

⁵ Rev. xvi. 15.

⁶ Rev. iii. 20.

⁷ Rev. xxii. 20.

⁸ Rev. xxii. 20.

⁹ Compare "πέμψον τὸ δρέπανον σου καὶ θέρισον,"—Rev. xiv. 15., with "Καὶ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τοῦ θερισμοῦ ἔρω τοῖς θερισταῖς."—Matt. xiii. 30.

the great winepress of the wrath of God, and the winepress was trodden WITHOUT THE CITY, and blood came out of the winepress even unto the horse-bridles."¹

Then, in accordance with the previous declaration, "*Hereafter ye shall see heaven open*, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," did the disciple to whom the Apocalypse was most appropriately sent behold, as Stephen had done before him, "*Heaven opened*," and lo, "a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, . . . and his name is called THE WORD OF GOD." Then was revealed to him, in characters of living light whose radiance should be reflected in the Church for ever, the specific aim and purpose of that advent of retribution, and an angel is heard crying "with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, both small and great . . . and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."²

Here is no strained interpretation. Here are no shifts resorted to, to defend a system. Here is no patching of the word of God, no miserable defence of a position which is plainly untenable. The glorious truth is written as with a sunbeam, and the whole body of the Scriptures coincides with it. The analogy of faith flows in one uniform direction, and never for a moment deviates from the right channel. The prophecies which went before, the definite statements of our Lord in the Gospels, the confirmation of the Epistles, and the symbols of the Apocalypse, proclaim with one voice the same grand and continuous truth which it has been the object of this chapter to demonstrate; that the second coming of our Lord is an event *which has already taken place*; that he came *then*, as he said, to destroy the nation and city, and to close the age; that *no other coming* is in any way alluded to in the Scriptures, except that advent of judgment and mercy which is here portrayed in the Revelation of St. John.

¹ Rev. xiv. 14—20.

² Rev. xix. 11—21.

LECTURE XVII.

THE MILLENNIUM, THE JUDGMENT, AND THE KINGDOM.

THE SONG OF VICTORY.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion."

"And with him an hundred and forty and four thousand."

"Having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

"And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps."

"And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the beasts and the elders."

"And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. . . . These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

"And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God."

"If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark

SEVENTH VIAL.

"He . . . shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem . . . descending out of heaven from God."
— Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

"The Bride, the Lamb's wife."

"His name shall be in their foreheads."— Rev. xxii. 4.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."— Rev. xix. 6.

"And again they said, Alleluia and the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne."— Rev. xix. 3, 4.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."— Rev. xx. 5, 6.

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."— Rev. xix. 8.

"The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought

in his forehead or in his hand, the same . . . shall be tormented with fire and brimstone."

"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night."

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit."

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name."

"And they sing the song of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty."

"Just and true are thy ways thou King of saints."

"For thy judgments are made manifest." — Rev. xiv., Rev. xv. 4.

miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These were both cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." — Rev. xix. 20.

"Shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." — Rev. xx. 10.

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." — Rev. xix. 9.

"And I saw thrones, and they that sat on them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands." — Rev. xx. 4.

"I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God." — Rev. xix. 1.

"True and righteous are his judgments." — Rev. xix. 2.

"For he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth." — Rev. xix. 2.

THE subject which we pursued in our last Lecture, was The Coming of the Son of Man.

We proved that this coming could not delineate the future judgment of all mankind, because it is connected with the destruction of a *particular city*,—that it must have been local, not universal, because it is connected with the punishment of a *particular people*,—that the Scriptures do not recognise the notion of a personal coming to this earth, but uniformly speak of it in terms which represent it as a manifestation — an apparition — a momentary and lightning-like Apocalypse, similar to the vision of Stephen or the Transfiguration. We proved by scriptural argument, which it is as hopeless to overthrow as to

evade, that our Lord came, *as he said*, to destroy Jerusalem, and to close the Jewish dispensation. We pointed out a part of the magnificent and complete proof which can be adduced to determine the time of his coming, and which invariably conjoins his advent with the punishment of the disobedient Jews. We established incontrovertibly that, whether in ignorance of the real state of the case or otherwise, the doctrine of an immediate advent within the lifetime of the then existing generation was the universal belief of the Church at that period; and that so far from supposing thousands of years would intervene, they held and taught the doctrine of a coming close at hand, and lived and acted out this truth as men some of whom might "tarry till he came," might be "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." No other coming but this is spoken of or alluded to in the Scripture. Our Lord said, "I will come *again*" (παλιν ἔρχομαι), *I am coming again*. St. Paul said, "he shall appear *the second time*" (ἐκ δευτέρου); but no mention is made of *any third coming* to judgment as distinct from his coming in his kingdom.

It is no sufficient answer to these views to say that the coming of the Lord may be postponed to any indefinite period, because St. Peter asserts that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

If you take into consideration the scope of the whole passage, you will find that scoffers of those days marvelled *that Christ had not already come according to his promise* — showing they not only expected an immediate advent, but that they considered the time which our Lord had pointed out for that advent to have already expired. "Where is the promise [said they] of his coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."¹ St. Peter answers their objection by saying that to the Eternal Mind one day was as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and that therefore their impatience was ill-timed.

But nothing was farther from St. Peter's intention than to lead them to suppose that any lengthened period would intervene before his second coming; nay, he declared it to be close at hand almost in the identical language employed by our Lord.

¹ 2 Peter, iii. 4.

"The day of the Lord will come *as a thief in the night*, in which the heavens shall pass away (*παρελεύσονται*)¹ with a great noise."

"The Lord is not slack (*οὐ βραδύνει*, delays not) concerning his promise."

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought *ye* [*then living to witness it*] to be."

"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."²

Surely it does not follow, because St. Peter, in answer to those who condemned our Lord as a false prophet because he had not already fulfilled the promise of his coming, quotes a verse from the 90th psalm showing that in the Eternal Mind there can be no divisions of time (a short space being the same to the Lord as a longer period), that therefore thousands of years must necessarily intervene between his first and his second coming. Surely the reply of the Apostle to the scoffers of those last days, that, although the time had not arrived, yet that nevertheless "the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night," cannot be perverted to signify that the period between the advents may be extended to any indefinite limit. And to put this as a conclusive answer to the plain declarations which determine with unwavering accuracy the time and the object of his coming, and to rest upon this single verse, the meaning of which is plainly declared by the context to be at utter variance with the sense usually attached to it, an argu-

¹ Our Lord not only repeatedly described that coming, which he said should take place within the lifetime of that generation, under the figure of the sudden approach of a thief (Matt. xxiv. 43.; Luke, xii. 39.), but he said that heaven and earth — *i. e.* the Jewish economy — should also pass away, *παρελεύσονται*, before his coming. (Matt. xxiv. 35.; Mark, xiii. 31.) So St. Paul: "*Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*" And this shaking of earth and heaven, plainly identical with the passing away of earth and heaven, is declared by the Apostle himself to mean the removal of the Jewish dispensation. "And this word, *Yet once more*, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." — Heb. xii. 26, 27.

² 2 Peter, iii. 9, 10, 11, 12.

ment, if argument it can be called, which is to bear up against the whole analogy of faith flowing in a contrary direction, appears to me special pleading of the feeblest kind,—a miserable escape out of a seeming difficulty, — a safety-valve, it may be, for a system, but no firm footing for a sincere inquirer after truth. If the faith of the whole Church rested upon such an argument, and was supported by no better conclusions, I should say it cannot be exposed too soon.

*Neither is the objection conclusive against these views, which supposes, because the coming of Christ is described in terms replete with majesty and terror, that events which then took place were not of sufficient importance to correspond with the grandeur of the prediction.*¹

It is not for us to say, ignorant as we are of the spiritual mysteries which accompanied that advent, that the language of Scripture is overstrained; neither is it for us to contravene positive statements respecting the time, &c., which we do know, because of the grandeur of Eastern hyperbole under which is depicted a coming the precise nature of which we do not know. We ought rather to remember that Scripture must ever be interpreted according to the analogy of Scripture, and that ample allowance must be made for Oriental phraseology and biblical metaphor. Thus, when St. Peter² says (in the

¹ There appears at first sight to be a difficulty with regard to such declarations as, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." (Rev. i. 7.) But this is only the repetition of our Lord's words given by St. Matthew and St. Mark, who both say that the men of that generation should see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. St. Luke has a little variation: he uses the singular number.—"Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud." (Luke, xxi. 27.) So also in his Acts of the Apostles:—"A cloud received him out of their sight;" and his coming was to correspond with his ascent.—"This same Jesus . . . shall so come . . . as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts, i. 9—11.) Accordingly St. John sees "a white cloud" (Rev. xiv. 14.), called in the parallel passage "a white horse." (Rev. xix. 11.) The idea meant to be conveyed, is that of the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus (the cloud being the symbol of the presence of the Deity), which appearing was to be local,—for *they which pierced him (the Jews) were to look upon him*,—and confined within the limits of a particular generation.

² We are met here by the objection that St. Peter compares the destruction of the old world under the flood, with the destruction of "the heavens and earth which are now." It is impossible to carry out this comparison in all its

only passage¹ in which the coming of the Lord is associated with the destruction of the material world), "The heavens shall *pass away* (*παρελεύσονται*) with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up,"² he only repeats his Master's words, thrice stated by the three Evangelists: "Heaven and earth shall *pass away* (*παρελεύσονται*), but my words shall not pass away," and that our Lord connected this passing away of heaven and earth, which he said should take place within the lifetime of that generation, with the time of the abrogation of the Mosaic law, is evident from the words — "*Till heaven and earth pass* (*παρέλθῃ*), one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."³ Indeed, it is well known that the passing away of heaven and earth is a figure often used in the Old Testament⁴ to denote some great change; and that in the passage of St. Peter to which we have referred, the destruction of the material world is not the idea intended to be conveyed, is evident from the context. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, *look for a new heaven and a new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness."⁴

Neither have I much respect for the opinions of those who

particulars, for the "heavens of old" cannot have been destroyed at the flood, whatever may have been done to the earth. It is a powerful confirmation of our position that our Lord should have described the destruction of Jerusalem as similar to that in the days of Noah. St. Peter is only repeating his Master's words: — "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." — Luke, xvii. 26.; Matt. xxiv. 27.

¹ "Among the disputed books, although they are well known and approved by many, is reputed, that called 'The Epistle of James and Jude,' also 'The Second Epistle of Peter,' and those called, 'The Second and Third of John,' whether they are of the Evangelist or of some other of the same name." — Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 25.

² 2 Peter, iii. 10.

³ Matt. v. 18.

⁴ Speaking of the introduction of the Christian dispensation, Isaiah says (lxv. 17.), "Behold I create *new heavens and a new earth*, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind;" and that this whole chapter and subject relate to the period of the Gospel dispensation is clear *upon apostolic authority*, for St. Paul quotes the first verse of it as referring to the call of the Gentiles: — "Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." — Rom. x. 20.

say, that in a certain sense our Lord came to destroy Jerusalem.

What! were the Scriptures given to be interpreted in a *certain sense*, and that *certain sense* to be regulated according to our own discretion? There is no absurdity of which the Scriptures may not be made capable upon such a system of interpretation. There is no doctrine which may not be levelled to the particular views of a particular party. Upon such grounds the great doctrine of the Atonement may be curtailed to include only the Jewish nation; and the death upon the cross, according to an ancient heresy, be interpreted to signify only a semblance and appearance of death. If men are to interpret the Scriptures in a *certain sense*, there is no truth, however deeply affecting their eternal interests, which may not be curtailed and levelled to the standard of human apprehension; there is no doctrine safe in the whole Bible. The Father may be, in a *certain sense*, the Creator, and the Son may be, in a *certain sense*, the Redeemer of the world. I do not say that Scripture is to be interpreted upon particular views founded upon particular texts, and that one or two texts, explained perhaps without due reference to their legitimate context, are to settle great and important truths; Scripture must ever be interpreted according to the analogy of Scripture; but this I do say, that when *the analogy of Scripture flows in one particular direction*, it is not for us to interpret that Scripture according to a *certain sense*, which has no deeper foundation than our own opinion.

Neither again is it a complete condemnation of these views, that they contradict opinions held by the majority of Christians.

The opinions of the majority of Christians have not always been right. In the days of Athanasius the whole Church was infected with the Arian heresy. In the time of Martin Luther the whole body of the Church believed in the infallibility and the supremacy of the Pope. In our day the endless sects and divisions amongst men of unquestionable piety, and the contradictory views held by parties whose religious honesty is not to be doubted, show that the truth is not as yet incontrovertibly ascertained. It is a wonderful fact, that the Scriptures written for our learning are not yet understood, and that in the

nineteenth century there should exist such a diversity of opinion respecting them ;—not that the Romanist has much to boast of, when he pretends to a uniform exposition of the Word of God ; that very uniformity is, in a certain degree, a proof of want of investigation and examination. Better to hold Protestantism, with all its divisions and searchings after truth, than a religion hood-winked with a monk's cowl. Better be tossed about upon a sea of wandering opinions, than do gross violence to the noblest gifts bestowed on man, and which distinguish him as the masterpiece of God's creation.

But I believe the day of light and truth is coming fast, and that men will throw aside opinions which cannot be based upon the Word of God, as their forefathers threw aside the bows and arrows and the chain-armour which had become useless. I believe the day is at hand when no mystification of the truth will be any longer tolerated ; when an enlightened population will demand, as they have a right to demand, not infallibility in their spiritual guides, but argument and proof instead of assertion and conjecture. I believe that even the sanctity of antiquity will not screen religious opinions from that searching examination to which they will be subjected, and that the inviolability of the dogma, "*quod semper, quod ubique, et ab omnibus,*" will not stave off the rude yet necessary hand of penetrating inquiry. All is progressing—physically, mentally, morally. "It has pleased the Giver of our thoughts, and the Disposer of our lot, to enlarge on all sides the boundaries of human knowledge. There is no science of the heavens above, or of the earth beneath, or of the waters under the earth, which has not revealed mysteries of its own."¹ Is spiritual knowledge the only knowledge that is not to share in the general development? Is the science of religion the only science that shall not profit in the general advance? I believe that floods of light will yet burst upon the Church, not from any new revelation, but from a more careful examination of that which we already possess, and that religion will be shown to be not only a theme worthy the attention of the highest range of human intellect, but the noblest and the grandest subject which can occupy the thoughts of man. Only let us

¹ "Rational Godliness."—Rev. Rowland Williams.

assume nothing rashly ; let us look at the Scriptures as a great and continuous whole ; let us interpret according to the analogy of faith ; and let us rely, not on our own wisdom, but on the guidance of that Holy Spirit who is able and willing to lead us into all truth.

An identity, complete in all its parts, has been established between that part of the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial which we have as yet considered. This identity is preserved and continued in the Song of Victory which now proceeds from the conquering Church of God.

Trumpet. "A Lamb stood on *the mount Zion.*"

Vial. "He shewed me that great city, *the holy Jerusalem.*"

T. "And *with him* [the Lamb] one hundred and forty-four thousand."

V. "*The Bride, the Lamb's wife.*"

T. "His Father's *name* written in their *foreheads.*"

V. "His *name* shall be in their *foreheads.*"

T. "*I heard the voice of many waters.*"

V. "*I heard . . . the voice of many waters.*"

T. "*And as the voice of a great thunder.*"

V. "*And as the voice of mighty thunderings.*"

T. "The voice of *harpers harping with their harps.*"

V. "Saying *Alleluia*, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

T. "And they sung as it were a *new song.*"

V. "And *again* they said *Alleluia.*"

T. "Before *the throne* and before *the beasts and the elders.*"

V. "The *four and twenty elders, and the four beasts, worship him that sat on the throne.*"

T. "And no man could learn that song but the one hundred and forty-four thousand *which were redeemed from the earth.*"

V. "*This is the first resurrection* : Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

T. "In their mouth was found *no guile.*"

V. The Bride "*arrayed in fine linen clean and white.*"

T. "For they are *without fault* before the throne of God."

V. "The fine linen is the *righteousness of the saints*."

T. "If any man *worship* the *beast* and his *image*, and *receive his mark*."

V. "The *beast* was taken, and with him the false prophet that had *received his mark*, which deceived them that had received and worshipped his *image*."

T. "He shall be *tormented with fire and brimstone*."

V. "Cast alive into a lake of fire burning with *brimstone*."

T. "For ever and ever."

V. "For ever and ever."

T. "And they have no rest *day nor night*."

V. "Day and night."

T. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, *Write*."

V. "And he saith unto me, *Write*."

T. "*Blessed* are the dead which die in the *Lord*."

V. "*Blessed* are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the *Lamb*."

T. "Yea [*ναί*, compare Rev. i. 7., *ναὶ ἀμήν*, yea, truth], *saith the Spirit*."

V. "These are the *true sayings of God*."

T. "I saw a sea of glass [the crystal sea *before the throne*, Rev. vi. 4.] mingled with fire."

V. "I saw thrones ["therefore are they *before the throne of God*," Rev. vii. 15.], and they sat on them."

T. "And them which had gotten the victory over the *beast*."

V. "Which had not worshipped the *beast*."

T. Neither "*his image*," neither had received "*his mark*."

V. "Neither *his image*, neither had received his *mark*."

T. "In his *forehead* or in his *hand*."

V. "Upon their *foreheads* or in their *hands*."

T. "And they *sing the Song* of Moses and of the Lamb."

V. "A great voice of much people saying *Alleluia*."

T. "Great and marvellous are thy works, *Lord God Almighty*."

V. "Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the *Lord our God*."

T. "*Just and true* (δικαίαι καὶ ἀληθιναὶ) are thy ways, thou King of saints."

V. "*True and righteous* (ἀληθινὰ καὶ δίκαια) are his judgments."

T. "For thy *judgments* are made manifest."

V. "For he hath *judged* the great whore which did corrupt the earth."

If you add this to the points of identity already established between the Trumpets and Vials, it will be found to be the finishing link in that chain of argument upon which I have conducted this interpretation. Had the resemblance only existed between a few of the Trumpets and Vials, and had it been of a doubtful and ambiguous character, it might have left room for question; but the identity, as far as it is possible in an allegorical book of this kind, has been perfect and complete throughout. The Vial has been an echo of the Trumpet, and, like an echo, has not failed to repeat the same notes; sometimes indeed the sounds, as is not unusual in the natural echo, have been doubled and repeated,—yet still the original quality of the sound has been in every case preserved. Nor does the resemblance cease until the judgments denounced under the Seventh Trumpet and the Seventh Vial receive their full and complete accomplishment—till Babylon has fallen, the Son of Man has come, and the elect are saved.

Our present Lecture comprises some of the most agitated questions in the Apocalypse—THE MILLENNIUM, THE JUDG-

¹ It will be seen that the view now taken of the Millennium is different from that previously adopted. The present notion inclines to that of the late

MENT, AND THE KINGDOM. For the sake of greater explicitness it will be best to take these points separately.

THE MILLENNIUM.

The Scripture account of it is as follows :—

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”¹

A space, called in this Book a thousand years, precedes the judgment at Christ's coming, during which period Satan

Professor Lee, whose work has been since consulted. Indeed, the light on this most difficult subject breaks in but slowly, struggling as it does through the bars of prejudice and previously formed opinions; but yet the principle of the book, *that Christ has already come*, is more firmly established in my mind than ever; and that principle, when applied to the interpretation of Scripture, must naturally lead to new and great results. If that principle be true, the consequences are of immense importance; if it be false, it ought to be refuted. “If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God ye CANNOT overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” — Acts, v. 38, 39.

¹ Rev. xx. 1—6.

is bound, and the risen martyrs live and reign with Christ previously to the resurrection of the rest of the dead¹, for

¹ Here a point arises of considerable difficulty. It will be observed that a distinction is made in the Apocalypse between the first resurrection, over which "the second death hath no power," and the resurrection accompanied by the second death; and that an interval, allegorically defined as a thousand years, intervenes between the two. During this interval the martyrs live and reign with Christ before his coming to judgment on guilty Jerusalem, and the resurrection of the rest of the dead. This idea of a first resurrection of the martyrs is frequently put forth in the Apocalypse. Hence, in the epistles to each of the seven churches, the promise of extraordinary bliss is made to "him that overcometh," *i. e.* to the martyrs. Hence the souls of the martyrs are seen enjoying rest *previously* to the resurrection of the rest of the dead.—"I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth [Judæa]. And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season," &c. (Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.) In chap. vii. 14., they are represented as having come out of "great tribulation," and arrayed with white robes. And the same idea is repeated in Rev. xx. 4.—"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God [*i. e.* the martyrs of those days]; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."

This idea of a first resurrection of the martyrs preceding that of the rest of the dead, is distinctly perceptible in the Epistles of St. Paul. He says: "The dead in Christ [*i. e.* the martyrs] shall rise *first*." "Then" (ἐπειτα, after that again, — the same word used of the interval between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of those "that are Christ's at his coming,") "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds [ἐν νεφέλαις, in clouds], to meet the Lord in the air. This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not *prevent them which are asleep*," *i. e.* our resurrection shall not precede theirs. And it is worthy of observation, that they "which are asleep" are distinguished as the martyrs of Jesus, — τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, *i. e.* those put to death for Jesus' sake; — and that these rise previously to the coming of the Lord is made certain by the statement, "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." * — 1 Thess. iv. 14—17.

This was the "better resurrection" he prayed he might himself attain

* Compare the statement of Clement on p. 264. — "They who occupy the place of the righteous shall be made manifest (φανερῶνται) ["Then shall ye also appear (φανερωθήσεσθε) with him in glory (Col. iii. 4.)] in the visitation of the kingdom of Christ." This is elsewhere called "The manifestation (ἀποκάλυψιν) of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19.); "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee" (Zech. xiv. 5.); "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." — 1 Thess. iii. 13.

"the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."¹ Now there is no more necessity for supposing

unto: "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, *if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*," (Phil. iii. 10, 11.)—*εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τῶν νεκρῶν*, the resurrection out of the dead—the first resurrection; for we cannot suppose that St. Paul meant the resurrection of the rest of the dead. This made him say: "If we *suffer*, we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. ii. 12.) "If so be that we *suffer* with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 17.) He indignantly refutes the objection: "Then they also which are *fallen asleep in Christ* [*i.e.* those put to death for Christ's sake] are perished." (1 Cor. xv. 18.) And hence the thirst for martyrdom, which so long after prevailed in the Church. Is it too hard for us to believe that if our Lord could say to the dying thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," and if Stephen at the moment of his departure could commend his spirit *at once* into the hands of his Redeemer, that the immediate resurrection of the martyrs was a thing impossible? Is it too great an exercise of faith or reason, to "merge the notion of the resurrection into the idea of immortality?" True it is said, that "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice;" but in the parallel passage these are said to be "the dead," *νεκροί*, (John, v. 25—28.); and St. Peter tells us that "the Gospel was preached also to them that are dead," (1 Peter, iv. 6.)—*νεκροῖς*, which, of course, can only mean departed spirits—that they "might live unto God in the spirit."—1 Peter iv. 6.

Added to this, "eternal life" is represented in the Scriptures *as a present and not as a future blessing*. Believers are said in this life to have eternal life. Our Lord said: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, *and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*." (John, xi. 25, 26.) "This is the will of him that sent me, *that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life*." (John, vi. 40.) Hence it is said: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, *that ye may know that ye have eternal life*, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John, v. 13.) Hence it is said, that "no murderer *hath eternal life abiding in him*." (1 John, iii. 15.) Surely, then, if the germ of eternal life springs up in a believer's heart in this world, the fruit will not have to wait thousands of years ere it can be brought to perfection in the world which is to come. Surely, if eternal life *abides* in men—if "this *is eternal life*, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"—if "God *hath* given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son"—it cannot be thought that the gift of that life is to be deferred until thousands of ages shall have passed away. Such a theory would chill us to the heart. It would make the future less blessed than the present. No—if "to live is Christ," then it cannot be gain "to die," unless the absence from the body is at once the presence with the Lord; unless the earthly house of this tabernacle be at once changed for "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." No—if eternal life is now abiding in

¹ Rev. xx. 5.

this to be literally a thousand years, than for supposing the number of the Euphratean horsemen to be literally two hundred millions; and from the practice adopted in these symbols of putting a much greater number for a less, as in the case of the locust armies and the horsemen before alluded to, the presumption arises that only a short space is intended.¹ Neither is there any necessity to believe that a literal chain is put round Satan, or that a literal key confines the entrance to the bottomless pit.² The idea is, simply, that during a period allegorically called a thousand years, but put for a much shorter time, the power of Satan was so much restrained that he may be said to have been bound.³

us, then that purgatory of which the Scriptures do not say one word, which represents the good as waiting still for their perfection, and looking forward to a day of judgment yet to come, scarcely realises our ideas of a coming to "Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men *made perfect*."—Heb. xii. 22, 23.

There is no necessity to create this difficulty. Like all mysteries which beset the Scriptures, it is of man's own making. The resurrection must be a resurrection of man's immortal soul, clothed with a new and glorious body, *not of flesh and blood*. Such a resurrection must be spiritual and incorruptible, and therefore it may be immediate and invisible.

¹ The number 1000 is continually used in Scripture to denote a *much smaller number*: for instance—"Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." "How should one of you chase a thousand." "Though he live a thousand years twice told," &c., &c. St. Peter employs this indefinite period to denote the interval between the death of the martyrs and the coming of Christ. In answer to the objection that "*since the fathers fell asleep* all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation,"—he replies: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."—2 Peter, iii. 8.

This use of the number 1000 is also common in Josephus: thus he speaks of the Sicarii as "used to ten thousand murders." (Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 1.) It supports this view to remember that the Apocalypse is the Revelation of "*things which must shortly come to pass*." The Millennium consequently must have taken place before the compassing of "the camp of the saints round about" by the heathen armies of Rome, and the destruction of the "beloved city."

² The binding of Satan is a common expression for restraining his power. Thus Raphael is sent to bind Asmodeus. "He fled into the utmost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him."—Tobit, viii. 3.

Compare "How can one enter into a strong man's house, &c. . . except he first bind the strong man?"—Matt. xii. 29.

³ This time is unmistakably to be defined the period which elapsed be-

This is strictly in accordance with the analogy of Scripture. In the apostolic age, when the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church, the strong man armed no longer kept his palace, nor were his goods in peace. "A stronger than he had taken from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils." The Apostles everywhere cast out devils, and the devils were subject unto them. During their ministry Christianity penetrated as far as it did in the three centuries which followed. Not, then, to insist upon a well-known fact, suffice it to say, that a marvellous reaction then took place in the human mind, and that the Gospel was felt, especially by the Gentiles, to be the power of God unto salvation.

At the expiration of this period Satan was to be loosed out of his prison once more to deceive the nations (*ἔθνη*), to bring on times of terrible trouble and apostacy, and then to be destroyed.

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the

tween the first resurrection of the martyrs, which would go as far back as the death of the proto-martyr Stephen, and the resurrection of the rest of the dead at Christ's coming; it is also guarded against misconception by the circumstance that it precedes the destruction of the "beloved city;" for "when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth [*τῆς γῆς*, Judæa], and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city" (Jerusalem). This can only refer to the period of the invasion of Judæa by the Romans. No other land but the land of Judæa is called in this book "the earth," without some distinguishing qualification which makes it certain that no particular land is intended. No other city has any claim to be called "*the beloved city*," except that city of which it is said, "He loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

The proof of this appears to me to be beyond question.

There never was so dark a period in the history of the world as "the little season" which preceded the downfall of the Jewish people. Satan had then "great wrath, because he knew that he had but a short time."

Times of unheard-of and unprecedented wickedness came on: the earth was veritably a pandemonium. Our Lord foretold that such would be the case. "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . *and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*"¹ St. Paul declared, "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first [*the falling away first, the well-known and expected apostasy*], and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. . . . And then shall that Wicked (*ἀνομός*) [Satan is called by this name in the Epistle of St. Barnabas, xv.] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming."² It is confirmatory of the Apocalyptic statement which represents Satan "bound" and afterwards "loosed," or, as it is expressed³, "cast into the earth, having great wrath," because he knoweth that he hath but *a short time*," that St. Paul speaks first of the withholding and then of the revealing of Satan, and appeals to their knowledge of the fact: "*Ye know* what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time."⁴ Indeed the period referred to was perhaps the darkest in the history of the world. The throne

¹ Matt. xxiv. 12.

² 2 Thess. ii. 8.

³ Rev. xii. 12.

⁴ This withholding and revealing, or, according to the Apocalypse, this binding and loosing of Satan, was not only foretold by our Lord, but was distinctly applied by him to the last evil days of that adulterous and sinful generation, which were to be worse than the first. "When the unclean spirit is *gone out of a man* [the Jewish nation], he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, *I will return into my house from whence I came out*; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished [by the apostolic ministry]. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits [seven being a number of completion] more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. *Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.*" — Matt. xii 43—45.

of Imperial Rome was filled by one of whom Eusebius says, "To describe the greatness of this man's wickedness is not compatible with our present object. . . . He did not proceed to destroy so many thousands with any calculation, but with such indiscriminate murder as not even to refrain from his nearest and dearest friends. His own mother and wife, with many others that were his near relatives, he killed, like strangers and enemies, with various kinds of death. In addition to all his other crimes, he was the first of the emperors that displayed himself an enemy of piety towards the Deity."¹

In the Jewish world a chaos of anarchy and indescribable iniquity darkened the last days of that fated dispensation. As I have elsewhere said (Lect. XIII.), no species of wickedness was too horrible to be practised; the generation of that day "filled up the measure of their fathers." The historian of the times blushes as he records the unheard-of enormities of the age, till, like another Sodom, it is ripe for destruction, and the avenging thunderbolt falls.

After this loosing of Satan, the period of which is so accurately defined, he is "cast into the lake of fire."² This is only what St. Paul had already said. "And *then* (the time of this apostasy) shall that Wicked (*ἀνόμος*) be revealed, whom the Lord shall *consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall *destroy* with the brightness of his coming."³ And the scenes of that judgment-day which immediately followed reveal "fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

And here a startling fact remains to be answered. The miraculous power of the evil spirit, partially restrained during the Apostolic age, but breaking out in one last tremendous effort ere it finally ceased, prevailed in the world *up to that period*, and has not since been heard of. From the fall to the period of our Lord's second coming, devils exercised visible agency over mankind; but from that epoch to the present time no authenticated record can be given of demoniacal influences being personally and miraculously exerted over the human race. This is in strict analogy with the word of God, which declared that the kingdom of Satan would be put down *at that time*. The devils in our Lord's day cried out from the bodies of men,

¹ Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 25.² Rev. xx. 10.³ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

“What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither *to torment us before the time?*”¹ In the parallel account in St. Luke, they beseech him “that he would not command them to go out into the deep.”² Speaking of the fall of Satan’s kingdom, our Lord said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;”—“*Now* is the judgment of this world: *now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*” St. Paul describes it as an event *shortly* about to happen:—“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet *shortly,*” (ἐν τάχει). And the Apocalypse tells us that this event, which the evil spirits knew would shortly take place, and which our Lord and his apostles spoke of as soon about to happen, did so happen at this time. Satan is bound “that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled:” and after that he must be loosed a little season. At the expiration of that “little season,” during which the heathen nations were gathered against Judæa and Jerusalem, and the darkest tragedy of this world’s history was enacted, “the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are [his destruction was to be contemporaneous with that of the Roman and Jewish Antichrist], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”³

This is in perfect keeping, not only with the Scriptures of truth, but with the evidence of our senses and with the facts of history. It is matter of certain knowledge that demoniacal agency was visibly and, if I may so express myself, personally exerted in this world up to a certain period. It is possible that in some mysterious manner Satan had the power of death over mankind. Hence the Son of man was manifested “that

¹ Matt. viii. 29.

² Luke viii. 31. The word translated “the deep” “τὴν ἄβυσσον,” is the same as that translated “the bottomless pit” in Rev. xx. 3.

³ “Τούτο λέγει ὅταν ἔλθῶν ὁ υἱὸς ἀντοῦ καὶ καταργήσῃ τὸν καιρὸν ἀνέμου, καὶ κρινεῖ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς, καὶ ἀλλάξῃ τὸν ἥλιον, καὶ τὴν σελήνην, καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας, τότε καλῶς καταπαύσεται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ.”—Barnabæ Epist. xv.

“Ἐγγὺς γὰρ ἡμέρα ἐν ᾗ συναπολείται πάντα τῷ πονηρῷ. Ἐγγὺς δὲ Κύριος καὶ ὁ μισθὸς αὐτοῦ.”—Barnabæ Epist. xxi.

“At Rome, indeed, they who deal with the image of that unquenchable fire, tending the tokens of their own punishment *shared with the dragon himself*, are of the class of virgins.”—Tertull. ad Uxor. lib. i. cap. 6.

through death he might destroy him *that had the power of death, that is the devil.*"¹ It is possible that this power was also extended over hell (Hades—the separate state)² Be this as it may, it is matter of positive fact, that up to a certain time a power was manifestly exerted over mankind, which has not since been exercised in like manner.

Then Satan was literally "the god of this world." Then "the strong man armed kept his palace, and his goods were in peace." Then he could say of the kingdoms of the world, "All this power will I give thee and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it; if thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." Then he ruled triumphantly over the bodies as well as over the souls of men.—Their bodies were literally the dwelling-places of demons. Devils spake from within them, and besought our Lord not to cast them into the abyss.—Devils drove them into the tombs, to lie there like wild beasts, "exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way."—Devils residing within earthly tabernacles of this body knew that Christ was coming to cast them into the bottomless pit, and besought him not to do so "*before the time.*" What more appalling situation can be conceived than that of the wretched demoniacs from whose writhing and tortured bodies the evil spirits spake, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to

¹ Heb. ii. 14.

² A marked distinction is always kept up in Scripture between death and hell. Hence it was prophesied of our Lord,—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, *εἰς ᾗδου*, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (Acts, ii. 27.) Hence St. Paul,—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave (*ᾗδης*), where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 55.) Our Lord says, "I have the keys of hell and of death" (*τοὺς ᾗδου καὶ τοὺς θανάτου*, Rev. i. 18.). Hence "death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them . . . and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 13.) With the destruction of Satan, his power over death and hell was to be destroyed. So St. Paul said, Christ "*hath abolished death*" (2 Tim. i. 10.); and that, at his coming, "death, the last enemy, *shall be destroyed*," (1 Cor. xv. 26.),—agreeing perfectly with the declaration of the Apocalypse, "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." This, of course, would not mean that men should not die, but perhaps that there would be no interval between death and happiness or misery, for he would be destroyed who had the power of death and of the separate state. Compare 1 Sam. xxviii., where the soul of the prophet is raised from the separate state by the agency of familiar spirits.

³ Luke, iv. 6, 7.

torment us *before the time*? ”¹ or that of the man who had his dwelling among the tombs, whom no man could bind, no, not with chains, who worshipped Jesus with a loud voice, “I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not”²; or that of the “certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination,” who, like the Pythoness of old, “brought her masters much gain by soothsaying”? or that of the man over whom the seven sons of Sceva took upon them to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus, when he “in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded”? What more convincing proof can be given of the undisturbed reign of Satan over the world at that period, than that Satan should have so far “blinded the eyes of them that believe not,” that the Son of God should have wrought among them mighty works such as no man ever did, and they should have failed to recognise and to receive the Lord of Life? It must, indeed, have been the hour of “*the power of darkness*” when they nailed him to the cross. Nay, does not the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit appear to have been given to the apostles at the Pentecost, with the view of counteracting the miraculous agency of Satan?³ Does not our Lord allude to it when he says, “When he is come he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment”? And why of judgment, but “*because the prince of this world is judged*”? Wickedness, it is true, there is still in the world: but there is not the wickedness *that there was*; and it may be that the evil which we witness is more the result of past than of present influences. Then “the whole world lay in wickedness,” *ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ, in the wicked one*; ⁴ then the only people who knew God, with few exceptions, were “of their father the devil.” Satan was literally the “god of this world;” and even the Holy Saviour was “led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.” Evil spirits gave answers from heathen shrines. Evil spirits were worshipped with unholy and revolting obscenities. “The things which the Gentiles sacrificed they sacrificed to devils and not

¹ Matt. viii. 29.

² Mark, v. 7.

³ “Ἐὰν γὰρ μακρόθυμος ἔσῃ, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, κατοικοῦν ἐν σοί, καθαρὸν ἔσται, μὴ σκοτούμενον ὑπὸ πονηροῦ πνεύματος.”—Hermæ Pastor, Mandat. v.

⁴ 1 John, v. 19.

to God." Evil spirits, even in the midst of God's own people, enabled wicked impostors to "shew great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect;" and evil spirits to the last day of Jerusalem's existence, and while the temple was burning hardened the stubborn Jews against repentance. This has all passed away. "At his appearing and his kingdom," the kingdom of Satan fell. Demoniactal influence, such as men were unable to resist, is unknown; and the astounding fact remains to be answered, that the visible kingdom of Satan prevailed up to the time of our Lord's coming, that then it perished and has not been since restored, and that the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were simultaneously withdrawn.

Contemporaneous with the destruction of Satan at the coming of Christ is the period of

THE JUDGMENT.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."¹

Now in the preceding verses this judgment is said to be synchronical with certain events which define and particularise the time when it was to take place. It is to follow the gathering together of the heathen nations described as Gog and Magog, who are said to dwell in the four quarters of the earth (nations remote from Palestine), against Judæa; for they "go up" on the breadth of the earth (τῆς γῆς—Judæa); they compass the

¹ Rev. xx. 11--15.

camp of the saints round about, and the *beloved city*, which can be only Jerusalem.¹

It will be satisfactory to find that the period which we have assigned for the judgment is clearly marked out in many other passages of Scripture.

1. *The judgment is represented by our Lord as about to happen in the lifetime of the generation to whom he spake.*

“The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment *with this generation.*” “The Queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment *with the men of this generation.*” And that the words “this generation” are to be understood in their obvious and literal sense, is evident from the preceding clause: — “As Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of Man be *to this generation.*”²

2. *This judgment was to be contemporaneous with our Lord's coming.*

“When the Son of man shall *come* in his glory, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him

¹ This decides the question of the time of the judgment; for “the beloved city,” elsewhere called “the holy city,” has long ceased to exist, and no hosts answering to the description of Gog and Magog have been since gathered together to battle against Jerusalem. Added to this, these nations come up on the “*breadth of the earth*” (Judæa)—where the contrast between the “nations” (ἔθνη) and the “*breadth of the earth*” (τῆς γῆς, Judæa) makes it morally certain that nothing else can be intended but the invasion of Judæa by the Romans. So also in Rev. ii. 18. The precise period of the judgment is pointed out with equal distinctness as the time of great commotions amongst the nations (ἔθνη), and the destruction of the Jewish people: — “*And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*”

² Luke. xi. 30. The phrase “*this generation*” is nowhere used in the New Testament except of the generation of men then existing. In the parallel passage of Matt. xii. 45. it is called “*this wicked generation,*” making it certain that no other generation could be intended. It gives weight to the idea of a judgment immediately consequent upon Christ's second coming, that they who are summoned before that bar, represent themselves as having *done many wonderful works* (i. e. miracles — δυνάμεις πολλὰς), and as *having cast out devils* in his name, which could only have been done during the Apostolic age.

shall be gathered *all nations*.”¹ This is the same as “the great white throne,” and the “sea (or the heathen world) giving up the dead that are in it.”²

“The Son of man shall *come* (μέλλει . . . ἔρχεσθαι, *shall soon come*) in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works.”³

“The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all”⁴ (described as *then living*, in vers. 16. 19).

“Who shall judge (τοῦ μέλλοντος κρῶν, *who shall soon judge*) the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom.”⁵

“Which the Lord, *the righteous judge*, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love *his appearing*.”⁶

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass (τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι, *that shall soon come to pass*), and to stand”⁷ (as in judgment) *before the Son of man*.”

3. *This judgment is elsewhere represented as about to take place immediately.*

“*The hour is coming, and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given unto the Son to have life in himself: and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel

¹ Matt. xxv. 31.

³ Rev. xx. 11.

² Matt. xvi. 27. This coming to judgment was to take place during the lifetime of that generation; for it is added — “Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here *which shall not taste of death* till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” (Matt. xvi. 28.) So, in Luke xix. 11., the time of the return of the nobleman, who went “to receive for himself a kingdom and to return,” is not only declared to be the time of the destruction of those citizens which would not that he should reign over them, but also the time of judgment, when he commanded his servants to be called to “know how much every man had gained by trading.”

⁴ Jude, 14.

⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 1.

⁶ 2 Tim. iv. 8.

⁷ Luke, xxi. 36. *To stand as in judgment.* Compare “Who shall stand when he appeareth?” (Mal. iii. 2.) “The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment.” (Psalm i. 5.) “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Rom. xiv. 10.) “Thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” (Dan. xii. 13.)

not at this: *for the hour is coming* in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.”¹ In this passage the judgment, the coming, and the resurrection are synchronous; and the time is pronounced to be close at hand.

“*Now is the judgment of this world*: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”² Here the judgment is represented as contemporaneous with the casting out of Satan, which is the very same idea with that of Rev. xx. 10.

St. Peter reiterates the statement of our Lord respecting an immediate judgment:—

“Who shall give account to him *who is ready* (τῷ ἐτοίμῳ ἔχοντι) *to judge the quick and the dead.*”³ Speaking of the judgment soon about to fall on the false prophets of those days, he says, “*Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*”⁴

St. Paul is equally clear and decided upon the same point:—“The times of this ignorance God winked at, but *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge (μέλλει κρίνειν, *he is soon about to judge*) the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.”⁵ So he “reasoned before Felix of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come” (τοῦ μέλλοντος, *soon to come*).

St. James confirms the preceding testimony, and speaks of the Judge “*standing before the door*” and of the judgment as impending:—“So do, as they that shall be judged (μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι, *who shall soon be judged*) by the law of liberty.”⁶

4. *This also is the judgment shared by the saints with their heavenly Master.* “Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, *ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*”⁷ “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, *and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*”⁸ “Do ye not know, that

¹ John, v. 25—29.

² 1 Peter, iv. 5.

³ Acts, xvii. 30, 31.

⁷ Matt. xix. 28.

² John, xii. 31.

⁴ 2 Peter, ii. 3.

⁶ James, v. 9. ii. 12.

⁸ Luke, xxii. 29. 30.

the saints shall judge the world? *and if the world shall be judged by you*, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? *Know ye not that we shall judge angels?* how much more things that pertain to this life?"¹ "*The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God* (*ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἀρχαῖσθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ*, *it is the time for judgment to begin from the house of God*);" *i. e.* the time is come that the saints should begin to judge.² And the time of this assessorship of the saints with Christ in judgment is declared to be *the time of his coming*:—"Judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come*."³ It is in perfect analogy with the rest of Scripture that the Apocalypse should unfold the vision of the martyrs already exercising this office:—"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, *and judgment was given unto them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*"⁴

Unless, then, we take the old and somewhat unscriptural view, that the judgment day⁵ is one particular day of twenty-four hours, and that in that day all the generations of mankind who have ever lived will stand in one enormous multitude to be judged at one time (a theory encompassed with difficulties), we may as well give credit to the uniform statement of Holy Scripture, that the day of Christ's coming was a day of judgment. If the judgment throne is the throne of his heavenly glory, if the parties judged are they who are judged for the things done in their bodies, the events of that great day of assize must necessarily have been unknown to dwellers upon earth. Nay, if every soul who had ever lived from Abel to the period of his coming had risen in their spiritual bodies to meet their judge, such a spiritual resurrection could not have been visible to mortal eyes except by divine permission. To me it

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

² 1 Peter, iv. 17.

³ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

⁴ Rev. xx. 4.

⁵ The word "day" is continually used in this prolonged sense. The time of Christ's preaching to the inhabitants of Jerusalem is called a day:—"If thou hadst known at least in this *thy day*" (Luke, xix. 42.); "Now is *the day* of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2.), *i. e.* the time when the grace of the Gospel was offered to mankind; "Her plagues shall come in *one day*" (Rev. xviii. 8.), equivalent to "*in one hour* is thy judgment come" (Rev. xviii. 10.), meaning the sudden destruction of Jerusalem. Neither must we be led away by the expression "*the last day*," so often mentioned in Scripture, "*the last day*," according to the analogy of Scripture, being the closing period of the Jewish dispensation.

has always appeared an extraordinary thing that Christ should have come into the world, after the world had been in existence four thousand years, for the express purpose of bringing "life and immortality to light," and of establishing the doctrine of a resurrection and of a judgment day, and that this resurrection and this judgment day should have been again postponed to an indefinite period. It is more natural, and completely in unison with Scripture to believe, that as men die so are they judged—that Christ is judging now, for "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son"—that no purgatory, Papal or Protestant, intervenes between the hour of death and the day of judgment. It is perfectly in unison with Scripture to believe that the judgment of the dead was contemporaneous with the judgment of those who were found quick upon earth at "his appearing and his kingdom¹,"—that it com-

¹ No one will deny that the day of Christ's coming was a day of terrible judgment to those who were quick upon earth. No such judgment ever fell upon mankind. He "recompensed *tribulation*" to them that troubled his church. Upon them "came all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." He charged his disciples, in the most solemn terms, to be ready for this judgment:—"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke, xxi. 36.) Now if the judgment of the dead is contemporaneous with the judgment of the quick upon earth, that judgment, according to St. Paul, must have had its commencement during the lifetime of that generation; for he declared that some of those then living would be quick upon earth "at his appearing, and his kingdom:"—"Then we which are alive (*οἱ ζῶντες*, the quick) and remain unto the coming of the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 15.) "We shall not all sleep." (1 Cor. xv. 51.) So Rev. xi. 18. "The time of the dead that they should be judged" is not the period of the so-called dissolution of all things, but the time when "the nations (*ἔθνη*, the heathen nations) were angry" against Jerusalem, and the period of the destruction of the disobedient Jews.

This is an answer to those who draw an imaginary distinction between our Lord's coming in his kingdom, and his coming to judgment. The coming in his kingdom was his coming to judgment. Hence we read, "Who shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom*." (2 Tim. iv. 1.) "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." Hence, "in the end of the world" (age), he gathers "*out of his kingdom* all things which offend, and them which do iniquity." (Matt. xiii. 41.) Hence his coming is called the coming of "*the kingdom of God*." (Luke, xxi. 31.) Besides which, two advents are nowhere spoken of in Scripture after the first advent in the flesh. It is said, indeed, "he shall appear *the second time* without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28.); but it is nowhere said he shall appear the third time.

menced in the lifetime of that generation, — and that his saints share this judgment with him. This is confirmed by the testimony of our Lord and his apostles, and reduced to demonstration by the declarations of the Apocalypse.¹

Such are the Scriptural arguments upon which we build the theory of the millennial resurrection of the martyrs who lived and reigned during a period called a thousand years previously to the resuscitation of the rest of the dead, and of the judgment which accompanied our Lord's coming.

It surely need not be thought a detraction from that holy reverence for divine things which ought to penetrate the mind of every reflecting man, to believe that judgment is as near to him as the hour of death — that the soul passes at once to happiness or misery — that every death-knell tells of an immediate sentence corresponding to previous habits of life. It surely need not lessen our regard for Scripture to be fully aware that, although all things are possible with God, yet that he never works an unnecessary miracle, or suffers the settled laws of his general providence to be changed without sufficient cause, — and that since the resurrection is that of a spiritual and not of a natural, of a celestial and not of a terrestrial, of an incorruptible and not of a corruptible, of a heavenly and not of an earthly body, there is not the slightest ground, either from reason or Scripture, to suppose that the Almighty will reconstruct the identical dust of our earthly bodies, so thoroughly transformed, from various causes, from its original nature that it is by no means improbable that generations of men for ages innumerable have been feeding upon each other.² Nay, if

¹ “ Ille autem ut vacuum faceret mortem, et de mortuis resurrectionem ostenderet, quia in carne oportebat eum adparere, sustinuit ut promissum parentibus redderet, et ipse sibi populum novum parans dum in terris degit ostenderet quod, factâ resurrectione, ipse esset et judicaturus.” — S. Barnabæ, Epist. v.

² Take as an instance, the case of St. Ignatius devoured by wild beasts at Rome, of whom it is said that they ate him up so ravenously, that only the large bones were left. How impossible, except by the working of a far more stupendous miracle than that which called earth out of chaos, to re-collect the identical particles of that holy dust, which, passing into the bodies of these beasts, were converted into their bones, and muscles, and blood — became manure for the growth of plants — sprang up in a thousand new forms of existence, and may now possibly be the substance of some huge tree in America, or part

“flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God,” the only resurrection of which the mind can conceive is that of a spiritual resurrection; and there is no argument to show why that may not take place as the soul leaves this world to be judged for the things “*done in the body.*”

THE KINGDOM.

When the awful scenes which accompanied this day of judgment had passed away, a new and glorious *kingdom* was to be established. The righteous are invited to enter it:—“Come ye blessed of my Father, *inherit the kingdom* prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun *in the kingdom of their Father.*” Hence the disciples were taught to pray, “*Thy kingdom come.*” Christ is said to deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, that “God may be all in all.”

Is there any proof to show that “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,”—that the “government is laid upon his shoulder”—that he is ruling *now*,—that laws proceed from him which, day after day, control all things to the furtherance of his name and glory,—that a kingdom has been set up which has steadily progressed in one uniform direction for the last two thousand years—which, in spite of change, and convulsion, and war, and flood, and fire, has advanced in its grandeur and in its strength, prevailing over all opposition, “casting down every high thought that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,” stretching away

of the living matter of which the bodies of those who read this statement are composed.

In the Chemistry of Common Life, a most interesting tale is told of the insufficiency of human efforts to prevent the decomposition of matter. The body of an Etruscan king is discovered in a vault, clothed with all the paraphernalia of royalty—sitting on a throne, sceptre in hand—so life-like that it wants nothing but the living spirit to complete the reality. An aperture is made in the vault to gain possession of this relic of past ages; but the opening admits an enemy (the air) fatal to the incorruptibility of matter, and the phantom melts away into a handful of dust, the gaudy trappings alone remaining to show that such a vision had ever been.

from land to land, and from shore to shore, overleaping mighty oceans, and penetrating into the sands of the desert and into the ice of the pole? Is there evidence clear and sufficient, that a religion begun in shame and ignominy—promulgated by means most unlikely to obtain success—waging eternal war with the lusts and passions of mankind—supported by no earthly power, has found its way into the cabinets of princes, and into the huts of peasants, directs the councils of monarchs and the daily life of slaves, and is the grand principle of action which more or less stringently animates the intelligent and civilised portion of the human race? Is there proof that such a religion exists at all? *Then there is proof that the kingdom of Christ is set up; then there is proof that the "Lord God omnipotent reigneth;"* and the past is the pledge of the future, that he shall "reign for ever and ever."

You may see the traces of that kingdom in every event which has happened in the world for the last two thousand years. The chronological history of the world and of the church will unfold to you the glories of that kingdom. You may see its unwavering and steady progress in every fresh development of art and science, in every new acquisition of knowledge and civilisation. Railroads, electric telegraphs, the power of steam, and even the refinement of modern warfare, speak of its continual advance. It began like the snow-flake detached from the summit of some lofty Alp, and has become the avalanche. It commenced like the stream trickling down the mountain side; it has become the mighty river rushing to the sea. But why leave the analogies of Scripture? It is the *grain of mustard seed* becoming the great tree; it is *the leaven hid in three measures of meal* leavening the whole lump; it is the *stone cut out without hands* becoming the huge mountain; it is the *universal kingdom*, which was to succeed the four only universal kingdoms, and which was never to be destroyed.

Contrast the myriads of believers of our day and age, and of the days which have preceded them, with the time when one "upper room" held the whole body of the faithful. Compare the Christianity of our times with the period when "the number of the names together was [only] one hundred and twenty." Contrast the England of our day with the Britain of ancient times; contrast the 15,000 churches of this land—

her missions to the heathen, her benevolence at home, her institutions, her hospitals, her schools, her people—with the painted savages who exposed their fearless bodies to the javelins of Cæsar's soldiers, and then say that Christ does not reign, that his kingdom is not set up, that it does not progress with gigantic strides along the length and breadth of a regenerated world.

That kingdom had a particular time appointed for its commencement. It cannot be so properly said to have commenced with the teaching of Christ on earth, or with his death upon the cross, as at the period for which we contend.

John the Baptist announced its *approach*:—"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." Our Saviour did the same:—"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." He commanded his disciples to do likewise:—"As ye go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." He taught them to pray, "Thy kingdom *come*." That kingdom had not arrived after Christ's resurrection; for the disciples ask him, "*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel*." The Apostles, equally with our Lord, were the pioneers of this kingdom; they were the preachers of "the gospel of the *kingdom*," and witnesses that it was near.¹

"When he was demanded of the Pharisees *when the kingdom of God should come*," he told them that it should not come "with observation," that it should not be an earthly kingdom, not a visible reign on earth; and this he immediately explains to his disciples by saying, that the Son of man in his day should come "as the lightning," and that his kingdom should be revealed at that time.²

To check false impressions respecting the immediate advent of that kingdom, "he added and spake a parable . . . because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."³ In that parable he declared that the time of the kingdom would be the time of the coming of the King himself, and gave the solemn charge, "*Occupy till I come*." He

¹ Clement says, "the apostles went forth to preach the good tidings that, the kingdom of God was speedily about to come." Την βασιλειαν του θεου μέλλειν ἔρχεσθαι.—St. Clement, Epist. ad Cor. i. 42.

² Luke, xvii. 20.

³ Luke, xix. 11.

elsewhere declared that the passover would be "*fulfilled in the kingdom of God*," and that he would not drink of the fruit of the vine till that day when he drank it new with his disciples "*in the kingdom of God*;" and this period is declared by St. Paul to be the time of his coming:—"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *till he come*."¹

He told his disciples that that kingdom should not arrive *until his second coming*. "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. . . . *And when he was returned, having received the kingdom.*"² Consequently, he had not received the kingdom *until his return*.

Hence the Scriptures connect

"*His appearing and his kingdom.*"³

"The Son of Man *coming in his kingdom.*"⁴

"Lord, remember me *when thou comest in thy kingdom* (*Ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ Βασιλείᾳ σου*)."⁵

"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that *the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*"⁶

St. Paul speaks of this kingdom as immediately succeeding to the breaking up of the Jewish economy:—"Whose voice *then* (at Sinai) shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore *we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved,*" &c.⁷

So our Lord declared that it should be *taken from the Jew and given to the Gentile*, thereby directly connecting its establishment with the close of the Mosaic dispensation. "The kingdom of God *shall be taken from you*, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."⁸

Accordingly we find that the period of the full establishment of this kingdom is distinctly laid down in the Apocalypse:—

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

² 2 Tim. iv. 1.

³ Luke, xxiii. 42.

⁷ Heb. xii. 26.

² Luke, xix. 12. 15.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 28.

⁶ Luke, xx. 31.

⁸ Matt. xxi. 43.

voices in heaven, saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”¹

“*Now* is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”²

This kingdom is nowhere³ described as a visible and temporal reign on earth. This is the old error of the Jews revived. Our Saviour said distinctly, “My kingdom is *not of this world*; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, *but now is my kingdom not from hence*.”⁴ It is of such a spiritual character that St. Paul said, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit *the kingdom of God*; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”⁵ The “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,” is “*reserved in heaven*.”⁶ The sign of the Son of man appears “*in heaven*.” The saints which are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord are caught up “*to meet the Lord in the air*.” The thrones which St. John sees are *in heaven*; and that they are tenanted by heavenly beings is most evident, for he sees in them “*the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus*.” The place which Christ prepared for his people — “I go to prepare a place for you” — was one which *he left this world* to get ready for them. They were to be with him “*where he is*” — they were to live and reign “*with Christ*” — they were to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in “*the kingdom of heaven*.” Like the saints of old they desired “*a better country, even a heavenly*: where-

¹ Rev. xi. 15.

² Rev. xii. 10.

³ There is one passage (Rev. v. 10) where it is said, “we shall reign *on the earth*.” The preposition “on,” “ἐπὶ,” is badly translated: it should be “*over the earth*,” the verb βασιλεύω with the preposition ἐπὶ has the signification of reigning over: —

‘Ακούσας δὲ ὅτι Ἀρχέλαος βασιλεύει ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰουδαίας (Matt. ii. 22.): ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν ἐπὶ τῶν Βασιλείων τῆς γῆς” (Rev. xvii. 18.): “*βασιλεύομεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*” (Rev. v. 10.).

⁴ John, xviii. 36.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 50.

⁶ 1 Peter, i. 4.

fore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them *a city*.”¹

Besides all this, *Christ is reigning now*.² I cannot find any one who will deny this; then wherever he reigns, *his saints reign with him*: there is no possibility of separating the two things. Christ is not to reign first, and his saints to succeed him at some immeasurable distance of time; but they that “suffered with him were *to reign with him*,” — they that “suffered with him were to be also *glorified together*.”³ It is plain they do not reign now upon the earth, and it is equally plain that his kingdom ruleth over all. The notion of this visible and temporal reign of Christ on earth is, I fear, a dream and a delusion. Its advocates can find no arguments for its support from the New Testament, and it is only by twisting the imagery of the ancient prophets into a literal construction such as it never was intended to bear, and by confounding the glories of the new and heavenly Jerusalem with an earthly city

¹ Heb. xi. 16.

² Clement, who wrote *before* that kingdom had arrived, speaks of it as about to come immediately. “*Let us be looking hourly for the kingdom of God, in love and righteousness, since we do not know the day of the manifestation of God.*” “Ἐκδεχόμεθα οὖν καθ’ ἥραν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ οἶδαμεν τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ Θεοῦ.”—2. Clement. ad Cor. 12. The Church after that period had arrived represents Christ as having received the kingdom and seated on his everlasting throne. “The blessed Polycarp suffered martyrdom in the month Xanthicus,” Stratius Quadratus being proconsul, and *Jesus Christ reigning for ever and ever*.”

“Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος, μὲν δὲς Ξανθικοῦ, ἀνθυπατεύοντος Σπαρίου Καδράτου, βασιλεύοντος δὲ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.”—Epist. de S. Polycarpi martyrio.

³ Rom. viii. 17. Compare, “Being confident that they all have not run in vain . . . and that they are gone to the place due to them from the Lord, *with whom they also suffered*” — “ὦ καὶ συνέπαθον.”—Polycarp. ad Philad. 9.

“Post aliquantum temporis venit dominus ejus, et ingressus est vineam, quam quum depalatum vidisset decenter et circumfossam . . . ex facto hoc servi sui gaudium cœpit . . . ait deinde illis . . . Pro hoc igitur opere quod fecit, *volo illum filio meo facere cohæredem* . . . post dies deinde non multos . . . paterfamilias misit de cœnâ suâ servo illi cibos complures, quos quum accepisset ille . . . conservis suis distribuit. Hæc omnia quum audisset dominus ejus percepit iterum maximum gaudium, et convocatis rursus amicis et filio exponit, factum servi sui . . . Illi itaque tanto magis assenserunt patrifamilias, *ipsam servum cohæredem filio debere fieri*.”—Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 5.

yet to arise in Zion, that they have arrived at such marvellous conclusions.

It is not a little remarkable that these errors¹ have been pre-

¹ Lactantius says of the millennial period: "Then they who shall be alive in the body shall not die; but during those 1000 years shall beget an infinite multitude: and their offspring will be holy, and beloved of God. But they who shall be raised from the abode of departed souls will precede the living *like judges*. And the Gentiles will not be altogether extinct, but some few will be left to display the victory of God, and that the just may triumph over them, and that they may be subject to perpetual slavery.

"At the same time the prince of the devils, who is the author of all evil, shall be bound in chains, and be imprisoned during the 1000 years of the celestial empire, wherein justice shall reign throughout the world, that he may contrive no mischief against the people of God.

"After the coming of which, the just shall be gathered together from all parts of the earth, and the judgment being finished, a holy city shall be established in the middle of the world, in which the Founder, God himself, will dwell with the just reigning under Him.

"Then will that darkness be removed from the earth, whereby the heaven is now obscured and concealed, and the moon shall have the brightness of the sun, and shall no more suffer change; and the sun shall be sevenfold brighter than it is now; and the earth shall reveal her fruitfulness, and produce untill'd the richest fruits; the rocks of the mountains shall distil honey—wine shall flow in streams, and milk in rivers—the world itself shall rejoice, and all nature shall exult, being freed and delivered from the bondage of evil and impiety, sin and error.

"At this period brutes shall not live by blood, nor birds by prey, but all things shall be peaceful and tranquil; lions and calves will stand together in the stall—the wolf will not seize the sheep—the dog will not hunt—hawks and eagles will do no hurt—the infant shall play with serpents Men will lead a life of perfect tranquillity and abundance, and will reign together with God; and the kings of the Gentiles will come from the ends of the earth, with gifts and presents, to adore and honour the Great King, whose name will be famous and honourable among all nations under heaven, and all kings who rule upon earth. This is what the prophets declare shall come to pass."—Lactantius, lib. 7. *Sacred Institutes*.

Irenæus asserts that Christ said to his disciples, when speaking of the days of his earthly and visible reign, "The days will come in which vines will grow each having 10,000 branches, and on each branch there will be 10,000 twigs, and on each twig 10,000 clusters of grapes, and each grape, when pressed, will yield twenty-five measures of wine (*i. e.* about 209 gallons); and when any one of the saints shall take hold of a cluster of grapes, another cluster will cry out, 'I am a better cluster; take me, and on my account give thanks unto the Lord.'" — *Iren. Cont. Hær. lib. v. cap. 33*.

Papias, quoted by Irenæus, is guilty of similar absurdities: "In like manner a grain of wheat will produce 10,000 heads, and each head will have 10,000 grains, and each grain will yield ten pounds of clear fine flour: and other fruits will yield seeds and herbage in the same proportion; and

valent in the church from the earliest ages, and that the most fanciful speculations have been broached on this subject from the times of Papias to our own. Our age does not seem in this respect much behind the ages which have preceded. Dr. Cumming says, "The earth shall be made new, its soil restored, Paradise regained; there will be no decay in its verdure, no serpent's trail amid its flowers, but happiness and love, and joy and peace, for 1000 years, in the presence of Christ and of his saints." He supposes that Christ will come to open this splendid millennium at the latest before 1885. What, have Peter and Paul, and James and John, and all those saints of the Old Testament, who could not be made perfect until the gathering in of the first-fruits of the kingdom, have they waited for that promise nearly 2000 years? Why has their blessedness been so long delayed? What is there in the present aspect¹ of the world to make us think it is more ready now to be consumed by literal fire than it was thousands of years ago? *Where* are they waiting all this while; and why should they be glorified *now* instead of *then*? Our Saviour said, that during the generation of the men who had heard his words, he would "send his angels, and gather together his elect from the four winds."

all the animals which subsist on the productions of the earth will be peaceful and harmonious, and obedient to man with the most entire subjection."

"Primam resurrectionem suspicati sunt corporalem, inter cætera maximè numero annorum mille permoti sunt, tanquam oporteret in sanctis eo modo tanti temporis fieri Sabbatismum vacatione scilicet sanctâ post labores annorum sex millium ex quo creatus est homo, et magni illius peccati merito in hujus mortalitatis ærumnis de paradisi felicitate dimissus est; ut quoniam scriptum est, 'Unus dies apud Dominum sunt mille anni, et mille anni sicut unus dies,' sex annorum millibus tanquam sex diebus impletis, sequatur velut sabbati septimus in annis mille postremis, ad hoc scilicet sabbatum celebrandum resurgentibus sanctis." — Augustine, Civit. Dei, lib. xx. cap. 7.

"Παρ' ἡμῖν ἀνὴρ τις ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωάννης, εἰς τῶν Ἀποστόλων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν Ἀποκαλύψει γενομένη αὐτῷ, χίλια ἔτη ποιήσειεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ Χριστῷ πιστευσαντας, προεφῆτευσε, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, τὴν καθολικὴν, καὶ (συνελόντι φάναι) αἰωνίαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅμα πάντων ἀνάστασιν γενήσεσθαι, καὶ κρίσιν." — Justin. Quæst. 72.

¹ It is not a little remarkable how men have always thought that their own day was the day of the millennium. Eusebius found a heavenly Jerusalem in the church which Constantine restored. The reformers supposed the millennium began at the times of Luther. Christians of our day suppose it will begin in twenty years' time.

But Dr. Cumming says, No, —it cannot take place before 1885. St. Paul thought that some of those whom he addressed would be “*alive and remain* until the coming of the Lord.” But no, they will not be caught up to meet the Lord in the air ; but will dwell upon earth in our day and generation for 1000 years.

Where, too, shall he reign — in London, Paris, Rome, Constantinople, or Jerusalem? *How shall he reign* — personally or by delegates? Shall the kings of the earth be dashed from their thrones, or shall their hearts be suddenly changed to execute his behests? *He will reign too with his risen saints.* What, shall one half of this earth be spiritual, and the other half be carnal? Shall men and angels walk side by side? Shall men plunge, as they do now, into business, traffic, gain, lust, pleasure, in the presence, and unrestrained by the society of higher and more intellectual natures? Is heaven so poor a habitation, and all its joys and delights so worthless, that saints in bliss shall esteem it a great thing to exchange it for earth?

How, too, shall the risen saints mix with the ordinary mortals of the earth — what shall be their nature, their appearance, their occupation? Shall Abraham once more dwell in the tents of Beersheba — shall David once more pour forth his songs on Zion — shall Peter, and James, and John once more inhabit the shores of Galilee?

The earth, too, will be prepared for the reception of these risen saints; for Dr. Cumming gravely tells us, “The fire that is treasured up in the very centre of the earth shall burst forth at ten thousand crevices; the solid rocks shall blaze as if they were wax, and the rivers as if they were oil, and the weary old earth, having undergone the ordeal of the last fire, shall regain its pristine purity, and become fit for the immediate presence of the descending Saviour and his risen saints.”¹

We feel sure that Rome *ought* to perish; that it is *quite consistent* with the goodness and mercy of God that Babylon should be destroyed; and we cannot imagine an easier way of settling the question than “by the explosion of those fearful volcanic elements which pervade the whole of the Italian penin-

¹ Apocalyptic Sketches, p. 474.

sula." Of course Rome is much guiltier than London, Paris, Vienna, Madrid. Of course volcanoes exist in the Italian peninsula for the sole purpose of a retaliation of the 5th of November tragedy on a grand scale. I presume it is needless to inquire what purpose these "fearful volcanic elements" serve elsewhere, or to what use they could have been put *before* Rome was discovered to be the Beast, or *before* the scarlet Lady had acquired so meretricious a notoriety. True, they overwhelmed Pompeii and Herculaneum, and swallowed up a philosopher who sought to push his inquiries somewhat too far; but, if the date will allow it, we must suppose that the cities in question had already become infected with germinant Tractarianism, and that the luckless Pliny was at heart an embryo Papist. Of course Rome must be the incarnation and impersonification of the spirit of evil, compared with which the systems of Buddha, Confucius, and Mahomet are very babes of innocence and purity. Of course no "ism" which ever tainted the world with heresy—no, not even Tractarianism—deserves so completely to be made an holocaust. Well, then, burn it, if you will; but beware how you mix up the name of your merciful Lord with your unmerciful intentions, or connect his coming with an object so puerile and so uncharitable.

These views are attended, in my estimation, with great and insurmountable obstacles; they have no foundation in Scripture; they are a perversion of the legitimate principles of interpretation; they serve to amuse weak and unstable minds, and they encourage infidelity. How many will give up their leases, or dispose of their wealth, on the ground of this dawning Millennium? How many will withdraw themselves from the secular pursuits of life, from the conviction that the end of all things is at hand? The world, by its daily conduct, gives the lie to these speculations, and the preachers of these doctrines occasionally support the practices of the world. I know that I must die, and that after death there is the judgment, and a city of God prepared for me, if I shall be found worthy to enter it; and this leaves me at liberty to strive for my calling in this world, and to "provide things honest in the sight of all men:" but if I believed that before 1885 Christ was coming

in millennial glory—I do not say if I preached it, *but if I believed it*—I could not consistently with my own views be very careful about my temporal concerns; by so doing I should give the lie to the doctrine that I preached, or make men believe that I did not think that my Saviour, when he came, would be able to “supply all my need.”

To sum up our argument, I consider it proved that Christ came, *as he said*, within the lifetime of that generation to tread the winepress “*without the city*,” and to close the æon, or age—that the period immediately preceding his coming was one of unutterable wickedness, when Satan “had great wrath, knowing that he had but a short time,”—that at his appearing and his kingdom the visible agency of devils, personally exerted over the bodies and souls of men, disappeared, and has not since been heard of, and that the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit, given to counteract these demoniacal influences, were simultaneously withdrawn,—that He came to “judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom,” and that the judgments which fell upon the quick upon earth afford reasonable ground for believing that the spiritual judgment of the dead was executed at the same time,—that there was then a new and glorious kingdom set up, embracing heaven and earth; that the righteous were invited to enter into it; that they are now sharing that kingdom with him, and are “gone to the place due to them from the Lord,”—that this spiritual kingdom is daily developing more and more its progressive character, daily adding to the number of its celestial inhabitants, and to the church on earth such as shall be saved—daily advancing in the power of its might, until “the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.”

And one great point remains to be noticed: it is this. All this corresponds to present experience. It is only what we cannot help seeing. Here is no dark prophecy respecting futurity; for all we know, *anything may be future*, and no man speaks with greater immunity, or less probability of his assertions being refuted, than he who ventures to foretell things to come. And yet there is that strange restlessness in men’s bosoms, that longing after something which they have not,

that desire to penetrate into the things of eternity (a glorious earnest and foretaste of their immortality), that they recoil from truth, however evident, in their aspiration after mysterious and heavenly developments; and the subject of a kingdom of Christ yet to come, and of a personal and visible reign on earth, will have greater charms for them than, the unanswerable fact of a spiritual kingdom already set up, already changing the destinies of the universe, and reaching away in its superb and unlimited dominion from sea to sea, and from pole to pole.

LECTURE XVIII.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

REV. xxi. 1—27.

1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea.

2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.

5. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful.

6. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.

9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11. Having the glory of God ; and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ;

12. And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel :

13. On the east three gates ; on the north three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on the west three gates.

14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth : and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18. And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper : and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19. And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ;

20. The fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21. And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl : and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22. And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night there.

26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

REV. xxii. 1—5.

1. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

3. And there shall be no more curse ; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him :

4. And they shall see his face ; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

5. And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.

I OPEN this concluding Lecture with a quotation from Herder's work on the Apocalypse, called "Maran-Atha," — the Lord cometh. The extract is taken not from the original, which I have never seen, but from the commentary of Moses Stuart, to

which I already owe so much. The passage is of a sublime and highly poetical character.

“There is but one voice in the Apocalypse through all its epistles, seals, trumpets, signs, and plagues, viz., *The Lord is coming*. There is but one stamp on all its phenomena and wonders, ‘Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, is God the Lord, who is, and was, and is to come, the Lord of all.’ So declares John; he puts his seal upon it; and through all the images and signs of the book, everything by itself, and agreeably to the words of Christ and of the prophets, naturally points to this, The Lord said, *I come*, and he *did* come. The last of the ancient prophets exclaimed—‘Who will abide the day of his coming? he will sit and assay and purify the silver;’ and see; he sits and assays, and purifies the sons of Levi, as gold and silver. It is the first sign of his coming that he punishes, and is a swift witness against sorcerers and adulterers, and the unclean. His own, however, he distinguishes in a notable manner.

“The closed book is opened. The broken seals are forebodings, signs of his coming, mere significant signs. How often have the prophets said, ‘*The day of the Lord cometh, bloody, fearful, terrible.*’ His four plagues are his four horses before his chariot. His coming delays until blood-guiltiness has reached its height. When he does come, heaven and earth flee away at his presence — the forebodings are fulfilled — the trumpets sound — heaven and earth are dashed to pieces, — not merely city-walls fall, but pieces of the firmament, hailstones from God, mountains, clefts. Blow ye the trumpets — *The Lord comes*. Before him move along blood, fire, and smoke — The sun becomes darkness, the moon blood, before the terrible day of the Lord. Locusts march before him — before him prance the horses and their riders — He approaches — The last witnesses make their appearance — ‘I will send them Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord.’ He comes — shouts of victory echo from the heavenly world — on earth the abominations and monsters of cunning and malignity must be removed. Angels shout the fall of Babylon, the destruction of misleaders, that there may be rest — the sickle cuts down the harvest — the vine blossoms for a vintage, for a gladsome harvest.—‘Lift up your eyes, the field is already

white for the harvest.' The last and final plagues come. The day of the Lord is glowing like an oven, and all traitors are straw — The Euphrates is dry — The slaughter-offerings are collected — He comes as an avenger — He comes as Judge — The judgment is held — The righteous awake like morning stars, and after them the whole host — Babylon is fallen — Jerusalem shines in splendour — The dragon sinks down into the pit — *The Lord is King.*"

Oh, for the heart-stirring energy of the magnificent original to proclaim with a voice of thunder, of which the echoes might reverberate throughout the length and breadth of the land, — The Lord has come, — The Lord reigneth, — "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." "For ever and ever," "King of kings and Lord of lords." "For ever and ever," "Lord of lords and King of kings." "For ever and ever," Hallelujah! Amen! "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Oh, for lips touched with the living flame from the altar to express faithfully and without exaggeration, and yet fearlessly, and without regard to consequences, the deep conviction of eternal truth which has penetrated my mind; to "cry aloud and spare not, to lift up the voice with strength, and to say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God."

Yes. Behold him already come in the unanswerable fact that those his enemies who would not that he should reign over them have perished. Behold the deep footsteps of his awful coming — when he trod the winepress "*without the city*," impressed to this day upon the once chosen vineyard of the Lord. Behold the living evidence of that mighty advent in the perpetuated miracle of dispersed and isolated Israel, the never-dying witness, the ubiquitous memorial to every land and every age, that Christianity has triumphed, and that "The Lord is King." Behold the indisputable proof of the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom, in the establishment and continual advance of the kingdom itself — that stable throne — that omnipotent dominion around which earthly kingdoms rise and fall, and human dynasties swell and subside, like the waves of ocean breaking upon the rock. Why, then, dream of a coming yet future? Why give the rein to imagination, or suffer the

opinions of men to weigh for an instant against the plain and positive declarations of God's word? Why create out of the realms of fancy the unscriptural idea of a personal reign of Christ on earth? Why allow taste to draw a picture of which no transcript can be found in the inspired original? Why postpone and defer that kingdom? Why suppose that the glory which he "had with the Father before the world was," must be dwarfed and curtailed to mean a millennial kingdom upon earth? Why fabricate the painful supposition that this fair world, with all the beautiful children that are in it, will perish in one huge conflagration by means of the fire raging at its centre? Why invent, for some period near or remote, an "end of the world," which the Scriptures said should take place ere that generation had passed away? Why countenance the blasphemy, presumptuous as it is ignorant, that the end of the world shall arrive in 1885? *In a word, why depart from truth at all?* Why invest with a suppositious reality a coming of the Lord of which the Scriptures do not say one word,—a coming for an unknown object, for an indefinite purpose, into a world plainly unfit for his reception, and into a city not one stone of which has as yet risen from the dust, to rule over risen saints and living sinners, spirits of just men made perfect and mortals such as we now see subject to infirmity; to mix together in wild and irremediable confusion things human and things divine, an earthly sovereignty and a heavenly King, men and angels, worldlings and ministering spirits, a terrestrial city and a celestial throne, burning Babylon and the new and glorious Jerusalem? Why suffer bare assertions such as these, resting upon the *ipse dixit* of some favoured preacher, to weigh for a moment against Revelation? Why put the impotent conclusions of man into the balance with the declarations of eternal truth? Surely if the time of the coming of the Lord is defined in the Scriptures, it is safer to trust to that than to any supposition¹ of man to the contrary. Surely if Christ said he

¹ It is *supposed* that the prophecies respecting the destruction of Jerusalem are again prophetic of future events. This is contrary to the analogy of all previous prophecy respecting the destruction of cities, and they who incline to this view can only *suppose* so. Is this a foundation on which to rest so important a doctrine? Added to this, our Lord distinctly said that his words referred to no such future events. "The things concerning me *have an end*."

would come "*in those days*¹, *after that tribulation*," it is more prudent to believe his word than to give credit to anything that Chiliast or Millennarian of ancient or modern times ever coined out of the fanciful workings of a heated brain. Have the courage then to search, to examine, to judge, to believe, to hold fast for yourselves; and be prepared to hear your opinions attacked with all the virulence of established interest, and all the pertinacity of confirmed prejudice. But one kind of opposition to them you will never hear. You will never hear them met by quiet, steady, rational argument; for that is the one way in which they *cannot* be met.

To us individually, as to the Church in all subsequent ages, the coming of the Lord is an event yet future. To us individually *he has not yet come*; his coming will be to us "*the hour of death and the day of judgment*." We then, equally with the disciples, may use the prayer, "*Thy kingdom come*," for we may pray for the full and glorious consummation of that kingdom, the first advent of which was the object of their supplications. We, too, may pray "*that at his second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in his sight*," for we, equally with them, must meet a Saviour Judge, before whose bar a strict account must be rendered. This divine book, like the rest of Scripture, contains "*manna for all hearts and for all times*," and its lessons of warning and encouragement are not only applicable to those who were pronounced blessed if they should hear and read the words of this prophecy, but to hearers and readers of all lands and of all ages.

But while, in common with all inspired truth, the promises

"*Then shall the end come*." "These be the days of vengeance, that *all things which are written may be fulfilled*." "This generation shall not pass, *till all these things be fulfilled*; heaven and earth shall pass away, *but my words shall not pass away*."

¹ The reader's attention is particularly called to the expression "*IN THOSE DAYS*," occurring as it does four times in Mark xiii., and referring, in every case, to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem:—

"Woe to them . . . that give suck *in those days*." — Mark, xiii. 17.

"For *in those days* shall be affliction." — Mark, xiii. 18.

"Except the Lord had shortened *those days*." — Mark, xiii. 20.

"But *in those days*, after that tribulation." — Mark, xiii. 24.

and admonitions of the Apocalypse are suitable to the Church in every age, it is not criticism, neither is it piety, to invert the order of interpretation, to explain the secondary sense as if it were the primary sense, and to make the coming of our Lord, which he said should *then* take place, refer principally to a second and spiritual coming. Had the Jews thus understood their own prophets, the seventy years' captivity in Babylon might have been made to signify the present dispersion of the Jewish people, and the destruction of the literal Assyrian Babylon the future destruction of the spiritual Babylon. Had the disciples acted upon such a principle, they would not have forsaken Jerusalem as men leave a sinking ship, they would not have fled to the mountains when they saw it compassed with armies; no, they would have said, this is not the literal coming of Christ, we have nothing to fear from it; it is another and a second coming against which we must prepare. Had the readers of the Apocalyptic warnings thus interpreted the "things which must shortly be done," the winepress might have been "trodden without the city," and "the great city might have been divided into three parts," but not one note of fear or consternation would have been struck: the locusts might have arisen out of the bottomless pit, and the Euphratean horsemen might have slain the third part of men; but no heart would have been stirred up to "flee from the wrath to come." No, they would have said, these things do not relate to us; they relate to events yet at the distance of thousands of years; we have nothing to do with their primary, but only with their secondary meaning. The Trumpet may sound, but our business is with the echo. The Vial may be poured out, but our concern is with the distant reflection of its contents. The Son of Man may come, but it is not a literal, but a spiritual coming, against which we must prepare; Jerusalem may be destroyed, but our great duty is to flee from burning Rome. I need not say this is the inversion of prophecy, this is the "*ὑστερον προτερον*,"—the secondary sense placed in an undue position above the primary sense, and the uncertain and distant future preferred above the sure and tangible present. In their first obvious and specific meaning these prophecies relate to the coming of our Lord at the period when he abundantly declared he would so come. In their second general and universally applicable

exposition they relate to a coming of Christ which every man shall experience in his own person, and which shall be to him either the judgment of the great whore, or the marriage of the Lamb; the first resurrection, or the second death.

But you say, Shall I not see him "coming in the clouds of heaven?" Shall I not "lift up my head with joy, because my redemption draweth nigh?" Shall I not say, "Lo, this is my God, I have waited for him, and he will save me; I will be glad and rejoice in his salvation?" Yes, if you are in Christ, you will see him: nay, more, you will be "with him where he is, that you may behold his glory." But you will not see him coming in judgment on guilty Jerusalem; that is an event long passed. You will not behold him enthroned on an earthly Zion, or sending forth his mandates from an earthly capital. You will behold him the temple, the glory, the light, of the new and heavenly Jerusalem; you will behold him enthroned in a splendour which "needs not the light of the sun, nor of the moon," to add to its brilliancy; you will enter in among "the nations of them that are saved," "through the gates into the city;" you will drink of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb;" you shall "see his face, his name shall be in your foreheads," and you shall "reign for ever and ever."

The subject of our present Lecture is the new and heavenly Jerusalem which St. John sees coming down from heaven after the destruction of the old and faithless city. The two cities are placed in sublime contrast; and indeed nowhere in the Apocalypse is this characteristic feature more apparent than in the marked and magnificent antithesis which is evidently intended to be kept up between them. I subjoin a few of the most striking points of distinction.

"The whore."

"The Bride."

"The mother of harlots."

"The Lamb's wife."

"Upon her forehead a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great."

"The name of the city of my God which is New Jerusalem."

“Babylon the great, utterly burnt with fire.”

“That great city having the glory of God.”

“Babylon . . . the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit.”

“The holy city . . . prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Babylon,—thrust down with violence, and found “*no more at all.*”

The voice of harpers and musicians resounding “*no more at all.*”

The craftsmen of whatsoever craft labouring “*no more at all.*”

The sound of the millstone heard “*no more at all.*”

The light of the candle shining “*no more at all.*”

The voice of the bridegroom and the bride rejoicing “*no more at all.*”

New Jerusalem — “descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious.” “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

The one faithless, adulterous, earthly, local, and perishing;
The other faithful, true, heavenly, universal, and eternal.

The one shrouded with darkness, despair, desolation, and death;

The other resplendent with light, and love, and joy, and salvation.

The contrast is as obvious as the language is superb and sublime. I know of no book equal to this magnificent Book of God; no book that goes so directly to the heart; no book that so gloriously reveals that unseen future in which we shall

all soon be mixed. Even from a child I loved the Book ; and when, as a man, I did not understand it, still all ideas of happiness and heaven were gathered from it, and I dwelt with lingering awe upon the mysteries which I could not comprehend ; and now I feel (and I trust I do not utter the words presumptuously) that I do know somewhat of its nature and character, I recognise it as *The Book of books*,—The key to the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments,—The consummation of all prophecy,—The epitome of Revealed Religion,—The Book which of all others the Church should press closest to her bosom, which she should not put under a bushel or under a bed, but on a candlestick, that all within her pale may see the light,—The Book which, having been once perfectly understood, *is to be understood again*, and which in abler hands than mine may yet be shaped out into distinct and unanswerable truth.

May a merciful God raise up those whose name and influence, as well as learning and piety, may have weight in rescuing from its present deep oblivion this much neglected, much misunderstood, and much misrepresented Apocalypse ; may it be stripped of that robe of folly which ignorance and fanaticism have thrown around it, and be suffered to step forth from its disguise in the simple majesty of naked truth. May the mountains of crude and mystical interpretation, the Pelion piled on Ossa, which have well nigh crushed the life out of this Book of God, be thrown down, and, before some heaven-directed Zerubabel, may they “become a plain.” May the noblest volume in a Book, where all is stamped with the true nobility of Inspiration, be allowed the patient and intelligent hearing of minds neither biassed by prejudice nor blinded by superstition ; and above all, may a principle be applied to its interpretation, a principle clear and penetrating as the light, and, like that same light, cheering with its divine rays the hearts of those whom it illumines ; and may that principle be the one which has here been faintly shadowed forth, but which, as surely as truth must overcome error, is destined yet to come forth from its obscurity, yet to prevail over all opposition, yet to be received, not with a partial, but with an universal acceptance, and yet to be acknowledged by the church of God as the only

key which can fit this lock, and which can open this long sealed and this long perverted Apocalypse.

But to return to our subject. *I understand the New Jerusalem to be the city of God existing now in heaven.* I believe that *in heaven* are set up its everlasting walls, and its streets of "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." I believe that, as under the Jewish dispensation, there was an earthly and literal Jerusalem—a city which, in the period of its faithfulness, possessed the glory of God,—the visible Shechinah—a city adorned with the temple of God, and in which God condescended to dwell; so under the new and better dispensation, there is also *a city of God in heaven* "having the glory of God," requiring "no temple therein," for "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it;" a city not confined to Jewish worshippers alone, but open "to the nations of them that are saved," and into which "there shall in nowise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." I consider that the gates of this new and glorious city were first thrown open when the old city of God became an abomination, and that when the "harlot" perished, the glory of "the bride, the Lamb's wife," was revealed. I consider, that when the ancient city of God became the "hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird," there was then a peculiar propriety for the manifestation of "the great city, *the holy Jerusalem*, descending out of heaven from God." I look upon this city as the present glorious dwelling-place of the redeemed Church of God. I conceive that they who were partakers of the first resurrection entered at once into its pearly gates, and trod, in their new and glorious resurrection bodies, its streets of gold. But not to assert what I cannot substantiate by argument, I proceed to advance some proofs which help to establish this position.

1. If the Christian dispensation was to be superior to the Jewish dispensation, it would be unreasonable to suppose that the inferior economy should be possessed of greater privileges than the new and better covenant, or that the Jew should be able to boast of a temple, a priest, and a city to which the Christian can lay no claim.

The main argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews is to exhibit the superiority of the heavenly sanctuary, the heavenly Priest, and the heavenly city, over the earthly sanctuary, the earthly priests, and the earthly city of the Mosaic economy; to show that "The true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man," "The Great High Priest which is passed into the heavens," and "The city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God," are as much above the "worldly sanctuary," the priests "compassed with infirmity," and the "city which could not continue," of the Mosaic dispensation, as the redemption effected by the one great sacrifice, is above those continually recurring sacrifices which could never take away sins. To suppose, then, that the old and imperfect dispensation should possess a sanctuary, a priest, and a city, which cannot be found in the new, would be to exalt an inferior economy with privileges superior to those enjoyed by that which was to excel it, and to confer upon the covenant which had "decayed and waxed old, and which was ready to vanish away," advantages exceeding those of the "better covenant which was established upon better promises."

2. It would be natural for the Christians of those days, especially for the Hebrew Christians, to expect such a city.

The ancient city of God lay prostrate; Babylon was fallen, was fallen; their "holy and beautiful house wherein their fathers praised God was burnt with fire, and all their pleasant things were laid waste." The old Jerusalem had faded from the earth,—temple and palace, tower and battlement, cloister and pinnacle, glory, name, and nation had departed; the molten gold had dropped down like rain from the covering of the holy house, and the city which had been a city of God from the days of Melchisedek, fell, never again to be the chosen dwelling-place of the Most High. At this juncture the vision is unfolded of "The holy city, *New Jerusalem*;" "The bride, the Lamb's wife;" "That great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." There seems a peculiar propriety why such a vision should have been made known at this particular time. If there exists a shadow of a reason why, after the lapse of so many years, a new and earthly

Jerusalem should arise upon the site of ancient Zion, there seems on the face of it to be a tenfold reason why *at that time*, when God had no longer an abode on earth, a new and heavenly Jerusalem should be made known to an anxious and expectant world.

3. This city is not only frequently alluded to in the writings of St. Paul, *but the same title is given to it as in the Apocalypse*, serving to show that either the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews must have seen the Apocalypse, or else that the idea of this new and heavenly city was familiar to the Christians of those days.

"Ye are come," says St. Paul, "unto Mount Zion¹, and unto the city of the living God, *the heavenly Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel."² Nor is this the only mention of this new and heavenly city. In the epistle to the Galatians, the same apostle contrasts "Jerusalem which now is"—*ἡ νῦν Ἱερουσαλήμ*, Jerusalem then existing—with "*Jerusalem which is above*"—*ἡ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ*. He shows the superiority of the heavenly city over the earthly one. The one, local, temporary, the city of a particular people, burdened and clogged with ceremonies, "in bondage with her children;" the other, unfettered, universal, the city of all nations. The one, "Agar," "the bondwoman," "*which answereth to Jerusalem that now is*," to be cast out with her children; the other, "Free,"—"The mother of us all;"—her children, "the children of promise," never to be cast out.

¹ The following Hebrew parallelisms show that Mount Sion is identical with Jerusalem: "Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation" (Isaiah, lxiv. 10.); "Zion shall be 'plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps'" (Micah, iii. 12.); "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah, ii. 3.); "The Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (Zech. i. 17.); "I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem."—Zech. viii. 3.

² Heb. xii. 22—24.

“So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”¹

He elsewhere contrasts the perpetuity of this heavenly city with the ephemeral character of the earthly one: “Here have we no continuing city, *but we seek one to come*”—*Τὴν μέλλουσαν*, *THE city soon about to come.*² It was for this city that Abraham looked, when he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country: “For he looked for a city which hath foundations—*Τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν*—*THE city* (not *a city*, which makes the whole indefinite) which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”³ No temporal city was the object of desire to the patriarchs, — no Jerusalem to be set up on earth contemporaneously with the return of the Jews to their own land,—no Zion yet to be built on the site of ancient Jerusalem, upon whose earthly throne Messiah is to reign supreme. Nay, their conduct gives the lie to such visionary dreamings: — “They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, *an heavenly*: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, *for he hath prepared for them a city.*”⁴

4. *I observe once more, that the description given of this city and of its inhabitants plainly reveals its celestial character.* It is spoken of as “*Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem;*” “*Jerusalem which is above;*” “*The city soon to come;*” “*The city which hath foundations*⁵, *whose builder and maker is God.*” This is in strict and close analogy with the descriptions of the Apocalypse, which speak of it as “*The city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down from heaven from my God;*” “*That great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*”

It will be interesting to find that the early Christians regarded this city in the same point of view *as a city of God in*

¹ Gal. iv. 25—31.

² Heb. xi. 10.

³ Compare Rev. xxi. 18.

² Heb. xiii. 14.

⁴ Heb. xi. 13—16.

heaven. "Ye know," says Hermas Pastor, "that ye the Lord's servants are sojourning in a strange land, for *your city is far away from this city*; if therefore ye have care for your city, *in which ye are about to dwell*, why do ye buy lands here, and provide luxuries, and buildings, and dwellings which are superfluous,—for he who anxiously provides these things, *cares not to return into his own city.*"¹

Moreover, the character of its inhabitants serves to confirm this view. They are said to be "an innumerable company of *angels*, the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, *and the spirits of just men made perfect.*" So in the Apocalypse, they are described as "The redeemed from the earth," "the redeemed from among men," "the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb," "the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." And in the liturgies of the Greek Church these are represented as enjoying a present felicity and exercising a present adoration:—"As it is right and just to praise Thee, whom *the heavenly Jerusalem* in full assembly—the Church of the firstborn which are written in heaven—the *spirits of just men and prophets—the souls of martyrs and apostles*—hymn with songs of praise."²

5. It is worthy of notice that the period of the coming of the Lord Jesus in his kingdom appears to have been the time of the full development of this new and glorious city to the patriarchs and saints of the old dispensation, as well as to believers of the new.³ Hence it is said of them, "These (the patriarchs) all died in faith, *not having received the promises.*"⁴ "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, re-

¹ "Et dixit mihi, scitis vos, Domini servos in peregrinatione morari? Civitas enim vestra longe est ab hac civitate. Si ergo scitis civitatem vestram in quâ habitaturi estis, quid hic emitis agros, et apparatus lautitias et ædificia et habitationes supervacuas? Hæc enim qui comparat in hac civitate, non cogitat in suam civitatem redire." — Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 1.

² Liturg. S. Jacob. 109.

³ "Postquam autem recesserunt dico ad pastorem illum, quare domine, non est peracta ædificatio turris? Non enim, inquit, ante consummari potest, quam veniat dominus ejus, et structuram hanc probet. . . . Dominus enim ejus venturus est, ut consideret eam." — Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 9.

⁴ Heb. xi. 13.

ceived not the promise."¹ Hence it is declared that their glorification was contemporaneous with that of the saints of the new dispensation:—"God having provided some better thing for us, *that they without us should not be made perfect.*"² Hence it is that the reward is simultaneously given "*to the prophets and to the saints*"³, i. e. to believers under the first and second covenant. Hence the heirs of God by faith in Jesus Christ are said to "*sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God*;" and saints of the new dispensation "*come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*"⁴ Hence "*the song of Moses and of the Lamb*" rises up in notes of consentaneous harmony, and the gates and foundations of the heavenly city are inscribed with "*The names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel,*" and "*The names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.*"⁵

But does it not seem unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to suppose, that they who had so long looked for a city which hath foundations, who had all died in faith, not having received the promises, but who had only seen them afar off, should be told *after* the Redeemer had come to Zion, had brought in the better covenant, and had opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers — The gates of the city are still closed — you must wait for a new dispensation to fulfil its course — your glory must again be deferred until the general resurrection of mankind — the city you have looked for and supposed to be in heaven, is to be set up on earth in the year 1885 — the time when rewards shall be given "*to the prophets and to the saints,*" to the believers of the old and new dispensation, has not yet arrived. This would appear on the face of things a great difficulty, — a difficulty which there is no necessity for creating, and which is dispelled by the view of the subject which we have proposed.

6. *Add to this, the happiness of the new and glorious city seems especially suited to the martyrs of those days.* It is

¹ Heb. xi. 39.

² Rev. xi. 18.

³ Rev. xxi. 12. 14.

² Heb. xi. 40.

⁴ Heb. xii. 32.

with reference to rest after their deep affliction that the promise is made — “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”¹ Hence it is said, “He that *overcometh* shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son,” in which an especial allusion is made to martyrdom. Hence, the servants of God who inhabit it are described as “*They which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*”²

Indeed, sweet and holy words, breathing rest and peace, stand forth everywhere in this Book in blissful contrast to the sharp and piercing sorrows of the Church on earth. “I saw the souls of them that were *beheaded* for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”³ “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more*⁴; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: *and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*”

7. Neither should it be passed over that this heavenly city is prepared *for the martyrs of the churches to which St. John wrote*. There is, indeed, an allusion more or less plain to the glories of the New Jerusalem, in the promises made to the martyrs of each of the Seven Churches⁵; but to the

¹ Πένθος, κρᾶνγῇ, πόνος, words expressive of the agonies of martyrdom. Rev. xxi. 4.

² Rev. vii. 14.

³ Rev. xx. 4.

⁴ Compare 1 Cor. iv. 11.

⁵ *Ephesus*. — “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the *tree of life*, which is in the *midst* of the paradise of God.” — Rev. ii. 7.

“In the *midst* of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the *tree of life*, which bare twelve manner of fruits.” — Rev. xxii. 6.

Church of Philadelphia, that church in which alone of all the seven no blame was found, there is a distinct and unequivocal declaration that this new and heavenly city was to be the consummation of their hopes and their exceeding great reward: —“Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown; him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, *and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven*¹ *from my God*; and I will write upon him my new name.”

Smyrna. — “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the *second death*.” — Rev. ii. 11.

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the *second death* hath no power.” — Rev. xx. 6.

Pergamos. — “To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and in the stone a *new name* written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” — Rev. ii. 17.

“They shall see his face, and *his name* shall be in their foreheads.” — Rev. xxii. 4.

Thyatira. — “He that overcometh, . . . to him will I give *power over the nations*.” — Rev. ii. 26.

“He that overcometh shall *inherit all things*, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” — Rev. xxi. 7.

Sardis. — “He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name *out of the book of life*.” — Rev. iii. 5.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, . . . but they which are written in *the Lamb’s book of life*.” — Rev. xxi. 27.

Philadelphia. — “Him that overcometh . . . I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is *new Jerusalem, which cometh down from heaven from my God*.” — Rev. iii. 12.

“And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that *great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God*.” — Rev. xxi. 10.

Laodicea. — “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me *in my throne*, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.” — Rev. iii. 21.

“*The throne of God and of the Lamb* shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face; . . . and they shall *reign* for ever and ever.” — Rev. xxii. 3.

¹ This is only in conformity with the Jewish notion of the third heaven mentioned by St. Paul. The idea is, not that the New Jerusalem comes

Observe, here is no dreary interval of thousands of years between the hour of the martyrs' trial and the hour of their reward. Here is no break — no pause of centuries of imperfect bliss between the agony and the triumph, between the overcoming victory and the resplendent crown. Neither is the promise made to martyrs of a distant era, or to confessors of a future time. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith *unto the Churches*."¹ "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things *in the Churches*."² "*To the angel of the Church in Philadelphia* write . . . Him that overcometh . . . I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God*."³

The promises of the new and heavenly city shine out as brightly in the commencement as at the close of the Revelation. The first page utters the same note of promise and warning as the last, and the last the same as the first. The gates of the New Jerusalem are open to the martyrs of the Churches *to which St. John wrote*, and the martyrs of Philadelphia enter at once into "the city of my God." "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

Away then with the popular fallacy, which would represent the Apocalypse as a chronological prophecy of events of which some have already taken place, and of which others are yet to come. Continuity of subject, identity of aim and object, and unity of execution is stereotyped in every page and line. *It can refer but to one event, and one only.* Nothing but the strength of a Milo can tear apart this knotted oak; and the rebound is invariably the entanglement and the discomfiture of those who would divide that word of

down to earth, but that it is established in heaven above, — though perhaps not the "heaven of heavens," the highest heaven of all.

St. Hilary distinguishes between the "kingdom of the Lord" and the "kingdom of God," — the eternal and blessed kingdom, into which they are to enter after the resurrection, advancing to the kingdom of God the Father, by the kingdom of the Son.

¹ Rev. iii. 13.

² Rev. xxii. 16.

³ Rev. iii. 7—12.

truth, which is without seam, and which, like the unity of God, cannot be rent asunder.

8. Of "That Great city,"—"That Holy city,"—"New Jerusalem,"—"Holy Jerusalem,"—"The city of my God, which cometh down from heaven from my God,"¹—"Prepared as a

¹ Contemporaneously with the vision of this holy city, St. John sees "*A new heaven and a new earth.*" This is nothing more than the great and awful change from Judaism to Christianity. Our Lord said *thrice*, that "*heaven and earth should pass away*" ere the generation to whom he addressed those words had died. He elsewhere connected the period of the passing away of heaven and earth with the abrogation of the Jewish law: "*Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.*"—Matt. v. 18.

The same idea is expressed, in highly metaphorical terms, by St. Peter: "*The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.*"—2 Peter, iii. 10.

So St. Paul: "Yet once more (*ἐν ἀπαξ*, once again in a little while), *I shake not the earth only, but also heaven:*" and that by this shaking of heaven and earth nothing more was intended than the removal of the Jewish economy, is most evident from the explanation given by the apostle himself: "And this word, yet once more, *signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken*, of things that are made; that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."—Heb. xii. 26, 27.

Isaiah describes the glory of the Christian dispensation under a similar figure: "Behold, *I create new heavens and a new earth*, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind" (Isaiah, lxi. 17.). He declares of this new creation, that the "*new heaven and the new earth which I will make shall remain;*" and he connects all this abundantly, in almost every line, with the call of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ. Surely, a little attention to the subject, and a due regard to the analogy of Scripture, would "put a stop to all carnal Judaizing conceits of an earthly Jerusalem yet to be rebuilt," would make us understand, that if we would comprehend Scripture, we must compare it with the analogy of Scripture, or else we must fall into mysticism and confusion.

It appears, moreover, that the opinions of several of the ancient fathers were adverse to millenarian views.

Eusebius states that the doctrine of an earthly Millennium prevailed in the Church, owing to the respect for the antiquity of Papias: "Among which (things approaching to the fabulous) he said, that there would be a period of one thousand years after the resurrection from the dead, during which the kingdom of Christ should subsist in the body upon this earth: which I think that he supposed, having misunderstood the apostolic relations, not comprehending what was by them mystically uttered in similitudes; for he appears to have been a person of very confined mind, to judge from his sayings; nevertheless, he was the occasion that by far the greatest number of Church

bride adorned for her husband,"—"Having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious,"—"The city which had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof,"—how shall I speak—how add one thought to the glowing and burning words before me—nay, how even enter into their deep and hidden meaning, exhausting as they do every idea of greatness and glory, of light and love, of joy and salvation, of eternity and of immortality. They only may fully tell the everlasting tale of its supreme felicity, with whom, former things having passed away, have left their most pure and subtle spirits free from stains and trammels of earth, to grasp with the immortal powers of a renewed nature, the infinite consideration of the glory of God. For us the subject is too high, too wonderful; we cannot attain unto it; and we are fain to sum up our imperfect conceptions of superhuman happiness in words expressive of our own infirmity:—"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

But whatever be the blest condition of that new and heavenly city, we may be sure *that it is of no earthly kind*. Images, indeed, borrowed from earth are used to depict its glory and its greatness, yet still its celestial character shines through all, and makes it evident that the Spirit of God spake of heavenly things with a human tongue.

But whilst we look for deeper joys and higher blessedness than can be known on earth, let us beware of straining the symbols of the Apocalypse and of giving a literal meaning to every word of this sublime, yet allegorical description. We

writers after him held the like doctrine, pleading the antiquity of the man."—Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. 39.

Tertullian distinctly limits the joys of the Millennium to spiritual joys: "This (Jerusalem), we say, is provided by God for receiving the saints upon the resurrection, and refreshing them with the abundance of all (only spiritual) good things, in compensation for those which in the world we have either despised or lost."—Tertullian, adv. Marc. iii. 24.

"In the divine promises we look for nothing earthly or transitory, — no marriage union, according to the frenzy of Cerinthus and Marcus, — nothing pertaining to meat and drink, as Irenæus, Tertullian, and Lactantius, assenting to Papias; — nor do we hope that for the thousand years after the resurrection the reign of Christ will be on the earth." — Melito.

need not suppose that this city actually came down from God out of heaven ; it will be quite in keeping with the rest of the allegory to believe that it was, as our Lord says, "The city of my God . . . which cometh down from heaven from my God ;" that it was "*Jerusalem which is above*," as contrasted with Jerusalem on earth, and therefore fitly represented as "That great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

Neither is it imperative to believe that the length, the height, and the breadth of it were equal ; a city 375 miles (or 12,000 furlongs, reckoning eight furlongs to the Roman mile) in height, length, and breadth, would be preposterous. Neither is it necessary to suppose that the names of the Twelve Tribes are literally inscribed on the twelve gates, or the names of the Twelve Apostles on the foundations of the wall. It need not lessen our respect for Scripture to receive as highly allegorical the beautiful statement that the "river of life proceeded out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," or that the "tree of life, in the midst of the street of it, yielded her fruit every month." This is all symbol and allegory ; *and yet the basis of the symbol is pure and holy truth*. It is the Spirit of God speaking with the tongue of men, and assuring us that every image expressive of glory and incorruption fails to convey a complete idea of its happiness, its security, and its eternal joys.

But whilst due allowance must be made for the allegorical character of this sublime description, the distinguishing feature of the *celestial* character of this new and glorious city remains unaltered.

It is said to "come down from God *out of heaven*," to "descend *out of heaven* from God ;" it is called "the city of my God, which cometh down *out of heaven* from my God : " "the city of the living God, *the heavenly Jerusalem* ; " "*Jerusalem which is above* ; " "The city which hath foundations, *whose builder and maker is God*." Every expression serves to show that it cannot mean an earthly city ; every word serves to keep up a marked contrast between the "Jerusalem which now is" and the "Jerusalem above ; " The city which did not continue, and the city which was soon "to come."

Its government is of no earthly kind. No earthly king

issues its laws ; no earthly potentate rules on its throne : “ *The throne of God and of the Lamb* shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him ;” and that throne is not set up in any earthly city, neither is it filled by any earthly sovereign, but by him whose dominion is the universe, and whose glorious name is “ King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.”

Its glory is of no earthly nature. It is said to have “ the glory of God,” the Shechinah of God’s continual presence, —not like that faint reflection of the Divine glory which dwelt in the Jewish temple, but shining in light inaccessible and full of radiance, eclipsing sun, and moon, and stars : “ Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal.” “ And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it : for *the glory of God* did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

Its inhabitants are not of earth. They are “ the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus”—“ *The spirits of just men made perfect,*” united in holy fellowship with “ an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.” They are the 144,000 “ which were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb,” joined in the common bond of allegiance and perfection with the angels of God in heaven, those ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them which shall be heirs of salvation, whose number is “ ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.”

The character of its people is such as has never yet been found within the walls of an earthly city. “ The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; *for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.* And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” “ And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

Its happiness and joys such as cannot be known on earth : “ For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there

shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away." "He will swallow up death in victory ; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces ; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth : for the Lord hath spoken it." "For, behold I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create ; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people : and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days" (there shall be no more death) : "for the child shall die an hundred years old ; but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed . . . for as *the days of a tree* are the days of my people, and mine elect shall *long* enjoy the work of their hands."

Of what earthly city can it be said, "The building of the wall was of jasper, and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass, and the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones : the first foundation was jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst¹ : and the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass?"

Of what earthly city can it be said, "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof?"

Of what earthly city can it be said, that "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeded out of the throne of

¹ "Twelve stones also there were upon the breastplate, extraordinary in largeness and beauty. The first three stones were a sardonyx, a topaz, and an emerald. The second, a carbuncle, a jasper, and a sapphire. The first of the third row was a ligure, then an amethyst, and the third an agate. The first of the fourth row was a chrysolite, the next was an onyx, and then a beryl, which was the last of all."—Antiq. lib. iii. c. 7.

God and the Lamb: in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations?"

Of what earthly city can it be said, "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever?"

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God"—thou place prepared amidst the many mansions of the Father's house; things too bright, too wonderful for a world like ours—too high in their nature and character for a terrestrial Paradise; things, whose hidden depths, souls of slaughtered martyrs, and spirits of just men made perfect, alone can fathom; things, whose divine echoes are faintly caught on earth, and of whose unspeakable and illimitable glory we can only catch the dim and distant reflection; things, which are a joy to infinite intelligence and infinite love; things that pertain to eternity and heaven, to God and to his Christ, and to the throne set up on the everlasting hills.

And is it for us to bring down heaven to earth, to narrow its sublime realities, to compromise and to curtail its unspeakable promises, and to conceive of no bliss, no joy, no heaven, but such as can be dwarfed to the insignificant limits of our own perception? Is it for us to put a barrier to that everlasting kingdom which now holds heaven and earth in its sublime embrace, and to say that that celestial throne must be exchanged for a terrestrial and an earthly one? Is it for us to say that "the name at which every knee must bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth," must henceforth be adored only by one rank and class of the intelligent and admiring creation? Is it for us to say that the new and heavenly Jerusalem is not *now* the city of God in heaven, and that the saints of God do not *now* exult in its eternal joys? What! shall the glory of the second resurrec-

tion eclipse the first? Shall the blessedness of those who shall be raised hereafter exceed that of those "who first trusted in Christ?" Shall the promise, "blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection," be reversed to mean that the glory of the latter dead shall outshine that of the former? Shall the reward of those who shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, be inferior to that of those who are judged by them? Shall the boon to those that overcame be less than that awarded to those who are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses? and shall the martyr's crown of righteousness look pale and dim beside that of an ordinary servant of the Lord? Reason, analogy, Scripture, decide otherwise. With the coming of the Lord Jesus came the kingdom — the gathering of the elect — the perdition of the ungodly — the fall of Babylon — the dethronement of Satan — the opening of the gates of the heavenly city to all believers.

In heaven are to be seen its everlasting walls. *In heaven* are to be heard its eternal hallelujahs. *In heaven* are set up its gates of pearl, and its streets of pure gold like unto clear glass. Look up through the mists and films of earth with the eye of faith, and you will see its glory sparkling through the skies. Listen with the ear of holy expectation, and you will catch the echo of its celestial songs, pealing forth notes of sweet and solemn gladness, contrasting strangely with the hum and turmoil of this busy world. Gaze up stedfastly into heaven, and, like the martyr of old, you will see Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and your dazzled eye will catch the reflection of its streets of gold. Go on stedfastly, honestly, faithfully in the path of duty; and so "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom." Let the holy city come down from God into your soul; and let the words — no more death — no more sorrow — no more crying — no more pain — no more curse — no more night — speak to your inmost heart like an angel of God. Let the promise of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," be unto you a "well of water springing up into everlasting life." Let the eternity of the benediction, "I will make

him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," speak to you of never-ending bliss and of undying joy.

Home of the weary and careworn ; home of the fainting and desponding ; home of the storm-tossed and buffeted ; home of the prophet and of the saint ; home of the martyr and confessor ; home of the patriarch and the disciple ; home of the seer and the apostle ; Eden of the holy ones of Paradise ; Ark of the diluvian mariner ; Tent of the wandering patriarch ; Temple of the Israel of God ; City of the Christian Church, — blessed be thou. Blessed be thine everlasting walls. Blessed be thy sure foundations. Blessed thy holy ones within thee. Blessed thy saints which shall yet be gathered unto thee. "Thou shalt be called an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations." "Violence shall be no more heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders, but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."¹

Oh that he who writes, and they who read,—Oh that they who believe that this city is yet to be established upon earth, and they who catch the glitterings of its glory in the sky,—Oh that they who deem the Apocalyptic predictions to be unfulfilled, and they who seem to realise the history of their accomplishment,—may have grace to "enter in *through the gates* into the city." Not through the gates of their own perfection or their own righteousness,—not through the gates of human merit, or of fancied sufficiency. But "*through the gates*" unfolded by HIM who prepared this glorious city for their reception ; who made them fit to join the white-robed throng ; who justified them by his grace and sanctified them by his Spirit, and put his beautiful garments upon them, and redeemed them to God by his blood. "*Through the gates*,"—the everlasting portals—the many-leaved and massy doors, which Christ the Mediator—the Saviour—the Judge—the King—the Lord—can alone unfold.

¹ Isaiah, lx. 18, 19.

*"I am the door"*¹, by ME if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." "I am *A* and *Ω*, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, *and may enter in through the gates into the city.*"

¹ "PORTA VERO FILIUS DEI EST, QUI SOLUS EST ACCESSUS AD DEUM, aliter ergo nemo intrahit ad Deum nisi per Filium ejus."—Hermæ Pastor, Similitudo 9.

A P P E N D I X.

APPENDIX.

THE IDENTITY BETWEEN THE TRUMPETS AND VIALS.

SCENE WHICH INTRODUCES THE TRUMPETS.

"I saw the seven angels which stood before God."

"And to them were given seven trumpets."

"Woe, woe, woe, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet."
—Rev. viii. 13.

"And another angel came and stood at the altar."

"And the smoke of the incense . . . ascended up before God."

"And there were voices."

"And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound."

"And the angel took the censer and cast it into the earth." — Rev. viii. 2—6.

SCENE WHICH INTRODUCES THE VIALS.

"And I looked . . . and the seven angels came out of the temple."

"And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials."

"Seven golden vials full of the wrath of God."

"The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened."

"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God."

"And I heard a great voice."

"Saying to the seven angels, go your ways, pour out the vials of the wrath of God."

"Upon the earth." — Rev. xv. 5 — 8. Rev. xvi. 1.

FIRST TRUMPET.

"The *first* angel sounded."

"And there followed hail and fire mingled with blood."

"And they were cast *upon the earth*."—Rev. viii. 7.

SECOND TRUMPET.

"The *second* angel sounded."

"A mountain burning with fire was cast *into the sea*."

"The third part of the sea became *blood*."

"The third part of the creatures which were *in the sea* . . . *died*."—Rev. viii. 8, 9.

THIRD TRUMPET.

"And the *third* angel sounded."

"A great star . . . fell *upon . . . the rivers and upon the fountains of waters*."

"The third part of the waters became *wormwood*."

"And many men *died of the waters*, because they were made bitter."—Rev. viii. 10, 11.

FOURTH TRUMPET.

"And the *fourth* angel sounded."

FIRST VIAL.

"The *first* went and poured out his vial."

"And there fell a noisome and grievous sore."

"The first . . . poured out his vial *upon the earth*."—Rev. xvi. 2.

SECOND VIAL.

"The *second* angel poured out his vial."

"*Upon the sea*."

"It became as the *blood* of a dead man."

"Every living soul *died in the sea*."—Rev. xvi. 3.

THIRD VIAL.

"And the *third* angel poured out his vial."

"*Upon the rivers and fountains of waters*."

"And they became *blood*."

"Thou hast given them *blood to drink*, for they are worthy."—Rev. xvi. 4, 5, 6.

FOURTH VIAL.

"And the *fourth* angel poured out his vial."

"And the third part of the sun was smitten."

"The third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."—Rev. viii. 12.

FIFTH TRUMPET.

"And the *fifth* angel sounded."

"And there came locusts upon the earth."

"And the sun and air were darkened."

"They . . . hurt . . . only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

"And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man."

"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."—Rev. ix. 1—6.

SIXTH TRUMPET.

"And the *sixth* angel sounded."

"The four angels bound in (*ἐν*), at) the river.

"The great river *Euphrates*."

"The four angels . . . prepared for the hour" (*εἰς τὴν ὥραν*).

"Upon the sun."

"Power was given unto him to scorch men with fire, and men were scorched with great heat."—Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

FIFTH VIAL.

"And the *fifth* angel poured out his vial."

"Upon the seat of the beast."

"And his kingdom was full of darkness."

"Who repented not of their deeds."—Compare Rev. ix. 20—21.

"And they gnawed their tongues for pain."

"And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and of their sores."—Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

SIXTH VIAL.

"And the *sixth* angel poured out his vial."

"The angel poured his vial upon the river."

"The great river *Euphrates*."

"The way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

"The number of the army . . . two hundred thousand thousand."

"By these three was the third part of men (the men) killed."—Rev. ix. 13—21.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"The seventh angel sounded."

"There was war in heaven . . . and the great dragon was cast out."—Rev. xii. 7—9.

"And there were great voices in heaven."

"The mystery of God should be finished."

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven."

"And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings."

"And an earthquake."

"And great hail."—Rev. xi. 15—19.

ROME.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"I . . . saw a beast rise up out of the sea."

"Having seven heads and ten horns."

"To gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

"He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*."—Rev. xvi. 12—16.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"The seventh angel poured out his vial."

"The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air."

"And there came a great voice out of . . . heaven."

"Saying, It is done."

"There came a great voice out of the temple of heaven."

"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings."

"And . . . a great earthquake."

"A great hail."—Rev. xvi. 17—21.

ROME.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"The beast . . . shall ascend out of the bottomless pit."

"Having seven heads and ten horns."

"And upon his horns ten crowns."

"And upon his heads the name of blasphemy."

"And I saw one of his heads wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed."

"And all the world wondered after the beast."

"The dragon gave him power, and his seat, and great authority."

"Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."

"And it was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them."

"Power was given unto him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him."

"Whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain."

"From the foundation of the world."—Rev. xiii. 1—8.

THE FALSE PROPHET.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth."

"And he doeth great wonders

"The ten horns . . . are ten kings."

"Full of names of blasphemy."

"The beast . . . that was, and is not, and yet is."

"They that dwell on the earth shall wonder."

"The ten horns . . . give their power and strength unto the beast."

"Until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them."

"The waters which thou sawest . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

"Them that worshipped his image."—(Rev. xix. 20.)

"Whose names were not written in the Book of Life."

"From the foundation of the world."—Rev. xvii.

THE FALSE PROPHET.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet."—Rev. xix. 20.

"The false prophet that

. . . . and *deceiveth* them that dwell on the earth by means of those *miracles* which he had power to do in the sight of the *beast*."

"Saying, that they should make an *image* to the *beast* . . . and cause that as many as *would* not worship the *image* of the *beast* should be killed."

"And he caused all . . . to receive a *mark* in their *right hand* or in their *foreheads*."—Rev. xiii. 11—16.

BABYLON.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And there followed *another angel*."

"*Babylon is fallen, is fallen*."

"That *great city*."

"Because she made *all nations* drink of the *wine* of the *wrath* of her *fornication*."—Rev. xiv. 8.

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And I looked, and behold a *white cloud*."

wrought *miracles* before him, with which he *deceiveth* them that had received the *mark* of the *beast*."—Rev. xix. 20.

"Them that worshipped his *image*."—Rev. xix. 20.

"I saw the *souls* of them that were *beheaded* . . . which had not worshipped the *beast*, neither his *image*."—Rev. xxii. 4.

"Neither had received his *mark* upon their *foreheads*, or in their *hands*."—Rev. xx. 4.

BABYLON.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"I saw *another angel*."

"*Babylon . . . is fallen, is fallen*."

"*Babylon the great*."

"For *all nations* have drunk of the *wine* of the *wrath* of her *fornication*."—Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 3.

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a *white horse*."

"Upon the cloud one *sat*."

"Like unto THE SON OF MAN."

"*Having on his head a golden crown.*"

"And in his hand a *sharp sickle.*"

"He that sat on the cloud *thrust in his sickle on the earth.*"

"*And the winepress was trodden.*"

"*The great winepress of the wrath of God.*"

"And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles."

"And another angel . . . *which had power over fire.*"

"*And cried with a loud cry.*"

"To him that had *the sharp sickle.*"

"Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth."

"And the winepress was trodden *without the city.*"—Rev. xiv. 14—20.

"And he that *sat* upon him."

"His name is called THE WORD OF GOD."

"*And on his head were many crowns.*"

"Out of his mouth goeth a *sharp sword.*"

"*The kings of the earth and their armies . . . slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse.*"

"*And he treadeth the winepress.*"

"*The winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*"

"And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood."

"And I saw an angel *standing in the sun.*"

"*And he cried with a loud voice.*"

"Which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth."

"Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God."

"And the remnant were slain with the *sword* of him that sat upon the horse."

"And all the fowls were filled *with their flesh.*"—Rev. xix. 11—21.

THE SONG OF VICTORY.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And I looked, and lo, a *Lamb* stood on the *Mount Zion*."

"And with him an hundred and forty and four thousand."

"Having his Father's name written in *their foreheads*."

"And I heard a voice from heaven as the *voice of many waters*, and as the *voice of a great thunder*; and I heard the voice of harpers *harping with their harps*."

"And they sung as it were a *new song* before the *throne*, and before the *beasts* and the *elders*."

"And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were *redeemed from the earth*. . . These were *redeemed from among men*, being the *first-fruits unto God* and to the *Lamb*."

"And in their mouth was found *no guile*; for they are *without fault before the throne of God*."

"If any man *worship the beast*

THE SONG OF VICTORY.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"He . . . shewed me that great city, the *holy Jerusalem* . . . descending out of heaven from God."—Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

"The *Bride, the Lamb's wife*."

"His name shall be in *their foreheads*."—Rev. xxii. 4.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the *voice of many waters*, and as the *voice of mighty thunderings*, saying, *Alleluia*, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."—Rev. xix. 6.

"And again they said, *Alleluia* . . . and the four and twenty *elders* and the four *beasts* fell down and worshipped God that sat on the *throne*."—Rev. xix. 3, 4.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection*. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."—Rev. xx. 5, 6.

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the *fine linen is the righteousness of saints*."—Rev. xix. 8.

"The *beast* was taken, and

and his *image*, and receive his *mark* in his forehead or in his hand, the same . . . shall be *tormented with fire and brimstone.*"

"And the smoke of their *torment* ascended up *for ever and ever* ; and they have no rest *day nor night.*"

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, *Write, Blessed* are the dead which die in the *Lord* from henceforth: *Yea, saith the Spirit.*"

"And I saw as it were a *sea of glass mingled with fire* ; and them that had *gotten the victory* over the *beast*, and over his *image*, and over his *mark*, and over the number of his name."

"And they *sing the song* of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works *Lord God Almighty.*"

"*Just and true* are thy ways thou King of saints."

"*For thy judgments* are made manifest."—Rev. xiv., xv. 4.

with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had *received the mark of the beast*, and them that *worshipped his image*. These were both cast alive into a *lake of fire burning with brimstone.*"—Rev. xix. 20.

"Shall be *tormented day and night for ever and ever.*"—Rev. xx. 10.

"And he saith unto me, *Write, Blessed* are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, *These are the true sayings of God.*"—Rev. xix. 9.

"And I saw *thrones*, and they that sat on them ; and I saw the souls of them that *were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . .* which had not worshipped the *beast*, neither his *image*, neither had received his *mark* upon their foreheads or in their hands."—Rev. xx. 4.

"I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, *Alleluia* ; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the *Lord our God.*"—Rev. xix. 1.

"*True and righteous* are his judgments."—Rev. xix. 2.

"For he hath *judged* the great whore which did corrupt the earth."—Rev. xix. 2.

LONDON :
A. and G. A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-street-Square.

Acme
Bookbinding Co., Inc.
100 Cambridge St.
Charlestown, MA 02129



—



